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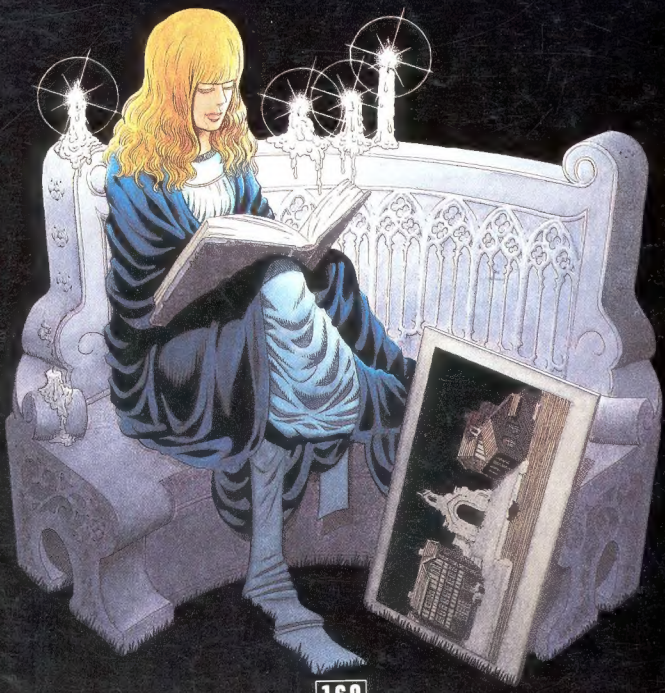
# CEREBUS
## mothers & daughters
19



169
APR

# NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

Okay. I hope that you all have found an art paper that you're comfortable with and a pencil that you're comfortable with. The next step is inking and the same thing holds true. There are a lot of different pen nibs, pen stocks and brushes out there for you to pick from. You really should buy a variety and try them out on the quick pencil sketches that you've done. It is definitely another variable in the equation and you will probably find that the art board or paper that you found to be the best for pencilling is not your favourite for inking. Alternate between pencilling heads and inking them and by process of elimination you should arrive at a paper or a board that you are happy with.

**********

Pens and pen nibs. I'm not going to tell you not to use rapidographs and I'm not going to tell you not to use felt tips or ball point pens. It does not take a great deal of imagination for me to picture a style that would be possible with any of those. But you really can't beat a crow quill nib (we use Hunt 102) for the simple reason that you can vary the thickness of the line with it. No matter how hard you press with a felt tip or a rapidograph or a ball point you are only going to get one line out of it. And that line is not going to give you the best reproduction. Eddie Campbell is a very good example of someone who resisted using crow-quill for years and inside of six months he swore by them, and as you can see from his work on 'From Hell' he has become a crow quill master. Gerhard does not use rapidographs for his cross-hatching. Even the finest rapidograph will not give you that fine, reproducible and consistent a line. It's Hunt 102 all the way (other people use different Hunts; 103 and 104 I think). Most people get scared off of the crow quill because it catches the paper and splik! a nice drawing becomes a Rorschach test. You're holding it wrong. You have to hold the pen stock so that the nib is at a slight angle to the page; less than 45 degrees. You have to always pull the pen toward you, you can't push it against the grain. If you exert a little pressure (a LITTLE) while you are pulling it towards you, the two flanges which make up the point will separate a bit and the line will thicken up. As you get more skilled at pressing and releasing, you will be able to get a gentle curve into your outlines that show more 'weight' than you will ever get out of a standard pen. Same thing with 'feathering'; those lines along an arm or outlining a cheek. They are short pen strokes, starting at a point and then going a little thicker as they connect with the outline. All it takes is concentration, a light touch and a mental picture of anything Bernie Wrightson has ever inked. Pick a light source. Any light source. All of the pen lines should be thin on the side facing the light and thicker on the side facing away. A Hunt 102 is not forever. We buy 'em by the gross and use an average of two or three per page (some of 'em are duds; either they're too brittle, a little bent or rusty. We throw those out after four or five lines and put in a new one). Start with the fine lines in your drawing, moving on to the thicker lines as the point begins to lose tension. Each time you press down a bit to get a thicker line, the flanges spread a little further apart. Don't ink a thick line for the underside of the chin and then try to put in the eyelashes. Always keep the pen nib clean. After a few lines, dip it in water and clean all of the old ink off with a tissue. Pluck the end of the pen nib with your thumbnail and index finger nail to pull out any stray hairs or fibres. Always test the nib after you've dipped it to make sure there's nothing in there. If the test line is too thick, there's something in the point that shouldn't be there. Always test the nib on the same kind of paper you're inking on; whether in an area that's going to be filled up with solid black or on a scrap piece of the board or paper.

**********

India ink. It's a bitch for most beginners and here's why; the bottles they sell it in are the wrong shape and it's too watery. When you buy the ink, make sure to shake the bottle to mix it up. If it's been sitting on a shelf too long, most of the ink will have settled. Take a straw or something and push it through to the bottom. If you feel sediment, stir it around until the ink is completely mixed. The bottles are impossible; all of them have really narrow necks and when you go to dip your pen, it either comes up dry or you've got ink covering the whole nib and half of the pen stock. Yech. The solution we've come up with is shallow plastic ink wells with screw on tops; the mouth of the ink well/bottle is about an inch across, so when you go to dip your pen nib, you can see exactly how much is getting on there. Ideally, you should only get maybe an eighth of an inch of the pen nib into the ink. Same basis as the professional billiard player who chalks his cue after every shot. You want to ink a small area or a few lines and then you want to wash the residual ink off and dry the nib and dip it again. A lot of people (even many professionals) complain that the ink isn't dark enough, which is true. Even if you get it to come out black, when you erase over it, it fades to that horrible brownish gray that will fuck up reproduction. Your best bet is to leave the cap off of the ink and let it evaporate until it is dark enough. This is a balancing act as well. When enough of the water evaporates, the ink is going to be dark enough to do areas of solid black which won't fade to gray when you erase over it, but it will be just too thick for the pen nib to flow as easily as it should. Ger and I have two different solutions; I add fresh ink in trace amounts until I have a good balance between 'dark enough' and 'too thick'. I do my solid blacks either at the beginning of the day when the ink has evaporated more, or at the end of the day for the same reason. Ger keeps two ink wells; one with thick ink for solid black and one

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 1 OF AARDVARK COMMENT*

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CEREBUS

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**DAVE SIM**
President

**GERHARD**
Vice-President

**LINDA BERZINS**
Typesetting

**MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS**
a novel

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**BOOK ONE**
(Cerebus 151 to Cerebus 162)
**Flight**

•

**BOOK TWO**
(Cerebus 163 to Cerebus 174)
**Women**

•

**BOOK THREE**
(Cerebus 175 to Cerebus 188)

•

**BOOK FOUR**
(Cerebus 189 to Cerebus 200)

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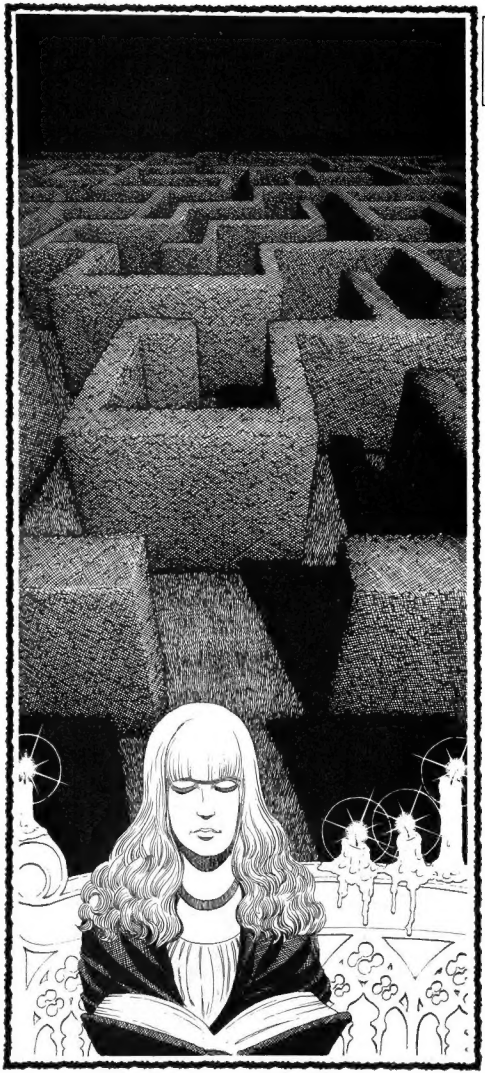


AND THEN JAKA understood. The maze and the book and her life were all connected.

Each baffle in the maze had been another chapter in the book; another episode in her life. It was dancing that moved her forward. When dancing was the center of her life she made progress through the maze. When dancing was not the center of her life, she would re-read the same paragraph a dozen times without comprehension. The maze would close itself off, becoming a small and confining cell with hedges for walls and try as she might she would be unable to find an exit. Then, just as suddenly, her mind would cease its wandering and she would be caught up in the story unfolding before her, unaware that she had turned a page or finished a chapter. Within the maze, an opening would appear and she would find the seemingly-endless passages were suddenly as familiar to her as the back of her own hand. Now, she was nearing her destination, the center of the maze. She turned right and then left and then right again. In a moment's time, she had stepped into a wide and quiet clearing. At its center was an ornate stone chair, intricately carved. On the back of the chair were four white candles, burning brightly and filling the air with the pleasing scent of blossoms in spring-time. On the seat itself there was a book. She picked it up and traced the gilt lettering on the front with her finger-tip. 'Jaka's Story', it said. She opened the cover and began to read.

IF I CAN DO IT, YOU CAN, the book began. The first page described the maze in such vivid terms that she could see it before her eyes, as if she were a bird flying above it. While she had so often felt that the hedges grew and that the passageways went from wide to narrow, she could see now that the height of the hedges and the width of the passageways were uniform and symmetrical.

She was aware that a small girl had stepped forward into the clearing and she felt, then, a pang of anxiety. She didn't wish to stop reading. But, if the child spoke to her, she would have to answer out of politeness. Even as she thought this, however, the child dropped lightly onto the carefully-groomed carpet of grass and began speaking in a low voice to her doll.

You see, Missy, the child was saying, things really don't change at all. It's just that when you're afraid or when you're angry or when you're sad, you can't see that *you're* the one who changed; not everyone and everything else.

Jaka could feel that the child was very much at peace being by herself, with only her little doll for company.

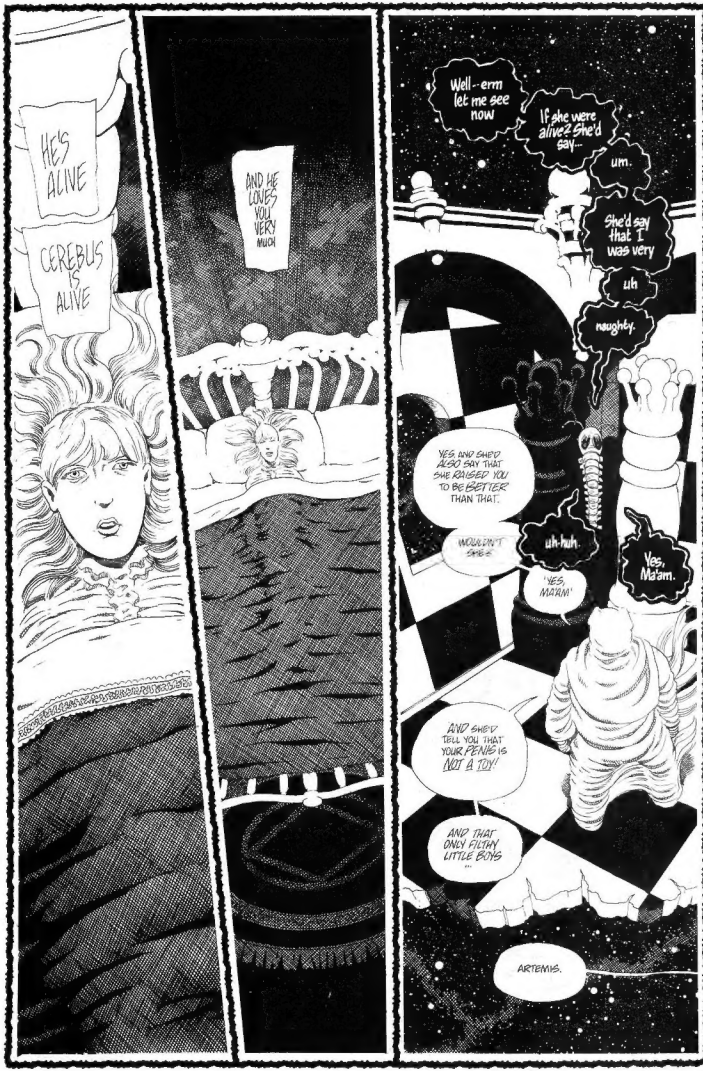
If I can do it, you can.

It was the way the story began and the way that the story ended.

Even as Jaka marvelled at the simple, yet inviolable balance of the book, life and maze, she sensed that the little girl was now standing beside her, looking up at her with wide and compassionate eyes.

Cerebus is alive, you know, she whispered.

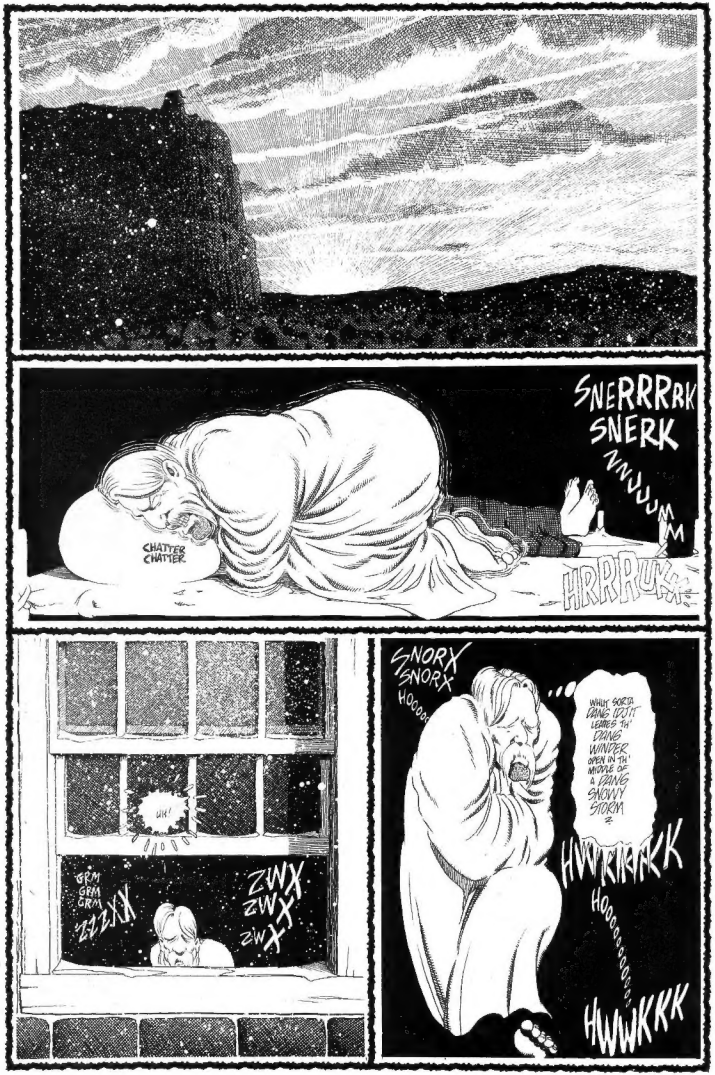
And he loves you very much.


HE'S ALIVE
CEREBUS IS ALIVE
AND HE LOVES YOU VERY MUCH
Well--errm let me see now
If she were alive? She'd say...
um.
She'd say that I was very
uh
naughty.
YES, AND SHE'D ALSO SAY THAT SHE RAISED YOU TO BE BETTER THAN THAT.
WOULDN'T SHE?
uh-huh.
Yes, Ma'am.
'YES, MA'AM'
AND SHE'D TELL YOU THAT YOUR PENIS IS NOT A TOY!
AND THAT ONLY FILTHY LITTLE BOYS ...
ARTEMIS.

NO 'BUTS' ABOUT IT.
YOU CAN DO ANYTHING IN A DREAM
AND THIS IS A DREAM, ISN'T IT...
er... technically that's true.
Hit a ... woman?
But ...
But ...
WHY DON'T YOU JUST ...
YOU KNOW
BELT HER.
?

'TECHNICALLY'?
'TECHNICALLY A DREAM' IS LIKE BEING 'TECHNICALLY PREGNANT'!
EITHER IT'S A DREAM...
OR IT ISN'T.
er
That isn't really...
True...
technically
ASTORIA? THIS IS NEITHER THE PROPER TIME NOR PLACE.
OH?
AND WHY IS THAT?
COULDN'T BE...
BECAUSE YOU AREN'T SURROUNDED BY HEAVILY-ARMED GUARDS...
COULD IT?
ASTORIA.
SHUT.
UP.

erm..
ulk
excuse me
but HULK
ladies
I can't pardon me
I..bulk
SAK
kick
AND WHAT IS IT...
SPECIFICALLY...
THAT YOU WISH ME TO KNOW...
ABOUT BISHOPS?


SNERRRRK
SNERK
NNJJJM
M
CHATTER
CHATTER
HRRRUMP
UH!
GRM
GRM
GRM
SNORX
SNORX
HOOOO
WHAT GORSH DANG IDJIT LEAVES TH' DANG WINTER DOOR IN TH' MIDDLE OF A DANG SNOWY STORM ?
HVVRRRRK
HOOOOOOOOOO
HWWKKK

SHH
SNX
SNX
ZUUUHHHHH
SNORRKKKK
GNUM GNUM
GNUM
ZZZZZ
GOOD THANG DAHN STILL A-DREAMIN'
THEY MEANS WILL GO BACK BACK TUH
SKRAAWX
NNNNNNN
FLUMPY FLUMP
ZZNOOORKKKKK

...THAT YOU PROPOSE TO LIVE TWO MALE CHURCHES?
...THAT YOU DELUDE YOURSELF THAT YOU CAN TAKE THEIR... TRANSGRESSIONS UNTO YOUR BOSOM?
THAT SOME MANNER OF ...REDEMPTION WILL ENSUE?
THAT YOUR BLIND DESIRE FOR POWER HAS..
I
SAID
...
SHUT UP!!
...WHAT WOULD YOUR MOTHER SAY ASTORIA ?
ABOUT USING YOUR FISTS TO SETTLE YOUR..
SHUT!
UP!

General Steinem: Look! Look at that. Another welt. He just walked into the room and another welt appears on her face.

Dr. Cameron: Please let me examine her. If you'll just . . .

General Dworkin: Examine her? It's your examinations that've led to this. What have you done to her?

General Greer: Please. There can't be any harm in this .

General Steinem: I think you've said quite enough already. This is sorcery. Open your eyes.

General Dworkin: Yes. Sorcery. Dr. Cameron, you stand accused of sorcerous interference.

General Greer: Wait. Wait. This is . .

General Steinem: You shut up, unless you want to be tried with him. Sorcerous interference. Verdict?

General Dworkin. Guilty.

General Greer. Innocent.

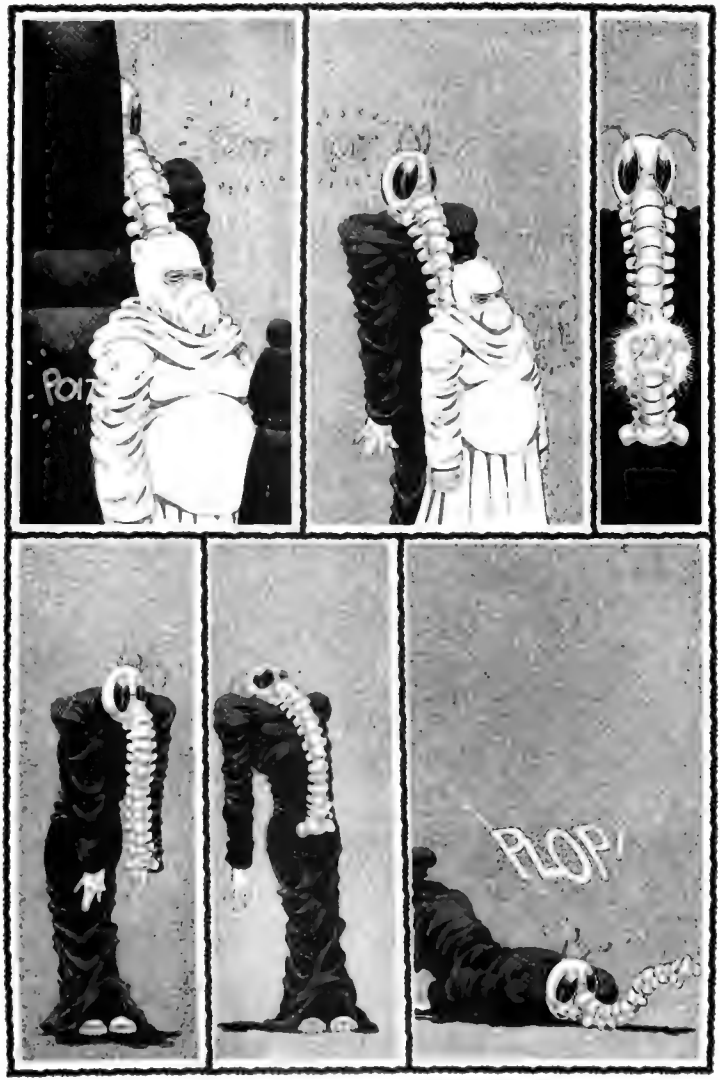
General Steinem: Sorcerous interference. Verdict?

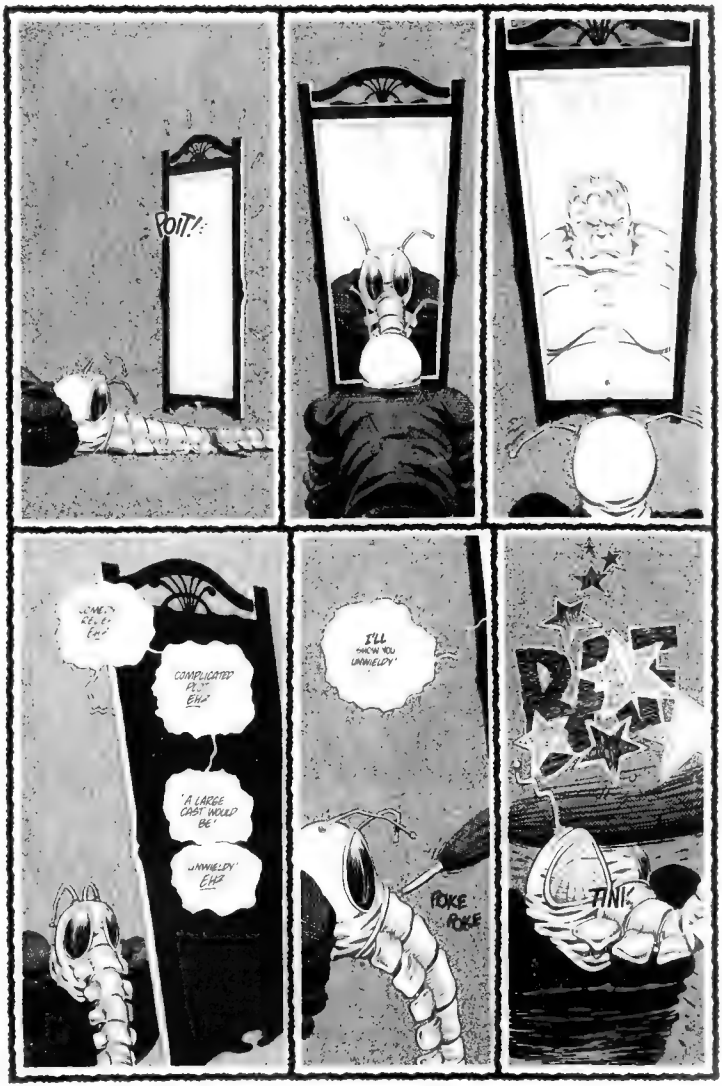
General Dworkin. Guilty.

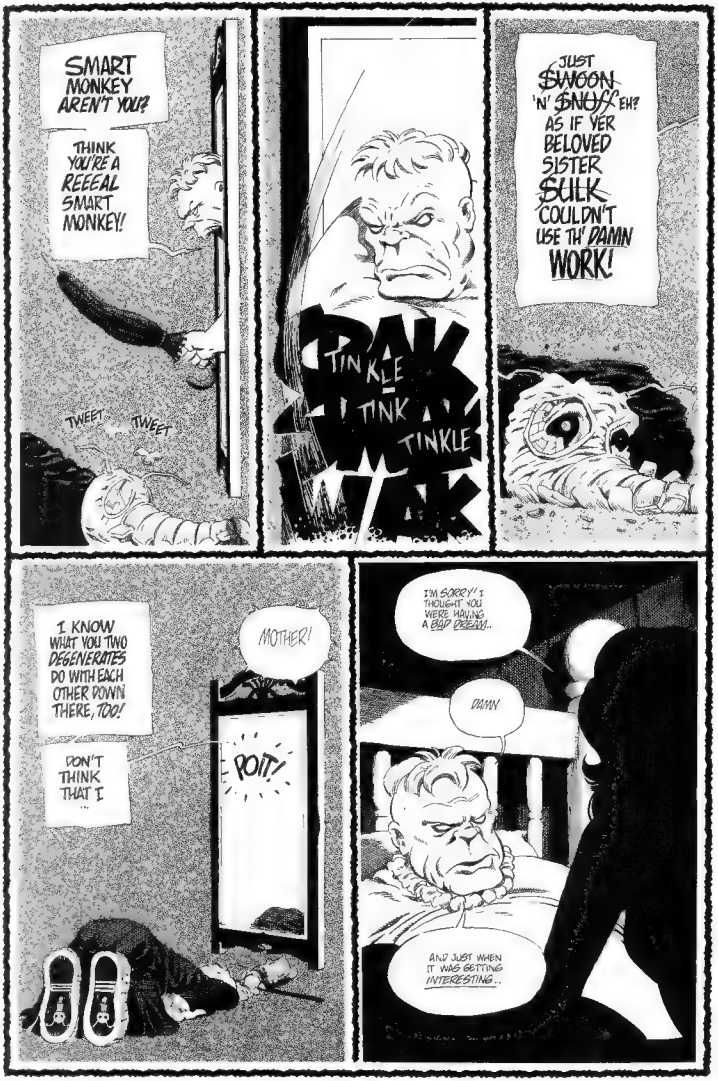
General Greer: Innocent. If you'll just let me say one .

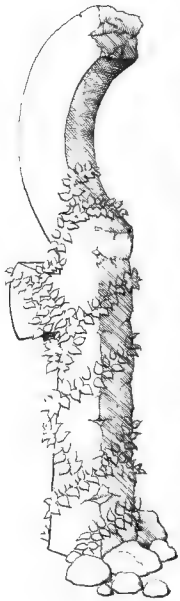
General Steinem: We can't permit you to interfere and violate the clear parameters of rendering a decision. I repeat. Sorcerous interference. Verdict?

SHUT...
IT'S ALMOST TIME, AGAIN...
POW!


POP
PLOP!


POIT!
COMPLICATED?? EH?
'A LARGE CAST WOULD BE'
'UNWIELDY' EH?
I'LL SHOW YOU UNWIELDY'
POKE POKE
FIN!


SMART MONKEY AREN'T YOU?
THINK YOU'RE A REEEAL SMART MONKEY!
TWEET
TWEET
TINKLE
TINK
TINKLE
TAK
JUST $WOON 'N' $NUFF EH? AS IF VER BELOVED SISTER $ULK COULDN'T USE TH' DAMN WORK!
I KNOW WHAT YOU TWO DEGENERATES DO WITH EACH OTHER DOWN THERE, TOO!
MOTHER!
POIT!
DON'T THINK THAT I ..
I'M SORRY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE HAVING A BAD DREAM..
DAMN
AND JUST WHEN IT WAS GETTING INTERESTING..



I am an old woman, of course, and so the various threats of punishment by our beloved government bother me not in the least. You are quite young however and so I suggest that you destroy this letter after you read it.

The answer to your question is that it just happened. Almost all of our men-folk were killed in the last great invasion by the Sepran Empire; either in the war itself or at the time of their withdrawal to within the borders of Lower Felda. We were raised to be ladies and with all of the natural obedience and politeness that that entails. How could we resist someone like Cirin? We had survived the Sepran occupation with our heads bowed and now that they were gone we had traded one military dictatorship for another. To be honest, I don't think any of us had considered that it would last. There was more food for the babies, fewer rapes; it was hard to see where that was so bad. But we had lost something vital. Back before the Cirinists; before the occupation by the Seprans (I'm so old, you know, I'm one of the few who can remember back that far) there was a balance and, truth be told, that balance favoured the women. Your great-great grandfather and I lived the same way that everyone else did. The men-folk had their work and they worked hard. Life wasn't easy, but we always had food on the table and not one of our five children ever went hungry. The women worked hard, too, make no mistake. But the men worked in competition with each other; some getting richer and some getting poorer and it would take its toll. I watched your great-great grandfather get old almost overnight when the trade routes started to change and they started the whole idea of tariffs in Iest and Painu. He couldn't do a thing about it and it hurt his pride and he had to work even harder to bring in the same money he had before. My life, a woman's life, was a regular thing; like a monk or a priest, you see. The work occupied my time and my attention, but it gave me an inner peace that you don't see now. I watched my children grow up and I knew all the secrets of life first-hand. It was

power, but it was a quiet kind of power, the thing that keeps it all going. We weren't trying to change anything, we were just keeping it going, we were part of it. I tried to make your great-great grandfather happy, because I knew him being out all day earning our daily bread that there wasn't a lot of happiness for him. We never talked about his work. As I used to tell him, he can leave his work outside or he can sleep outside with it. I like to think I was a comfort to him. He always looked a little younger in the morning when he went to work and I felt I owed him that much. Our home was a place he had built for us and I was there to help him lay aside his burden, cook him a warm meal and let him know there was someone who cared and who appreciated what he did for me and for his children. You know, you're the first one in the family who ever asked me about the olden times? I don't say much, because I don't think it's a woman's place; that's not the way I was raised. But I look at your mother and your aunts and their children when they come to visit and that . . . magic I guess you'd call it is gone. They fight about the things I used to make your great-great grandfather leave outside at night. They hardly notice their children which is to be expected when they give them over to strangers every morning to feed and to raise. The children are cold and it makes me sad to see. The really young ones, I'll tell them stories and play silly games with them and they'll light right up and the magic getting released from them is enough to make you cry til you never stop. By the time they're five or six, though, it's too late. They're hard and they're cold, just like their mothers. Strangers can only teach them how to be good strangers, I guess. They make fun of their fathers and they run wild or they accuse each other of being traitors and threaten to turn each other in to the Cirinist soldiers outside. A girl who hasn't even had her time yet owns more than your great-great grandfather and I ever had and all they want is more.

I just sound like a cranky old woman, don't I? I didn't know how happy I was way back when because I had nothing to compare it to. They tell me that I was oppressed. When I hear the word I think of your great-great grandfather because when I hear the word, I picture a burden that just gets bigger and bigger as you go along, a big weight that gets bigger as your strength begins to fail and finally it just crushes you. That was your great-great grandfather. My burden got lighter. The children grew up and they didn't need me every minute of every day like they did when they were younger, which is how it should be. With what they tell me now, your great-great grandfather and I should have both been carrying these enormous burdens and let the children fend for themselves. Your aunts and your mother are like your great-great grandfather; old before their time with these great weights on their shoulders as their strength begins to

Trial evidence 1411
Cirinist Government of Upper Felda
verdict: guilty
sentence: execution

Lord Julius:
How about this; "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury . . ."

Baskin:
Er. It's "The Joint Upper Felda and Iest Commission on Interest Rate Policy", Lord Julius. It's not a jury.

Lord Julius
A lot *you* know about it.

Baskin:
There won't be any 'gentlemen' is what I mean.

Lord Julius:
All right. How about; "Esteemed ladies of the Joint Upper Felda . . ."

Baskin:
They don't like to be called "ladies". Lord Julius. They consider it patronizing.

Lord Julius.
Patronizing! Don't they know an ingratiating distortion when they hear it? All right. What about; "My worthy opponents of the Joint Upper Felda . . ."

Baskin·
No no no. We want to persuade them that we're on their side; that we want to find a workable compromise.

Lord Julius·
Oh, is *that* what we want?

Baskin.
Yes. We want to show them that we're meeting with them in a spirit of cooperation and that we share their concerns.

Lord Julius·
All right. What about "Esteemed representatives of the Joint Upper Felda and Iest Commission on Interest Rate Policy."

Baskin:
Good. Very good.

Lord Julius:
"I welcome you today in a spirit of cooperation and shared concerns."

Baskin:
Very good. Go on.

Lord Julius
I can't. I'm stuck.

Baskin·
Stuck?

Lord Julius·
Yeah. I don't know what their concerns are.

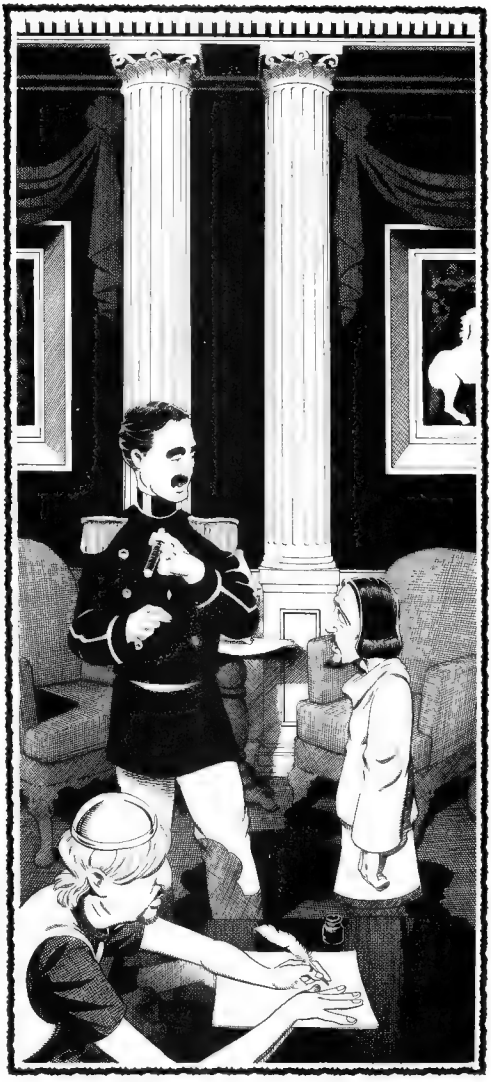
Baskin.
Their concern is that they think your interest rates are too high and they want to know the reason.

Lord Julius.
They want to know the reason? All right. "The reason that you think my interest rates are too high is that you aren't taxing your citizens enough. If you double your tax rates, my interest rates will fade to insignificance."

Baskin:
No no. They want to know the reason the interest rates are high; not the reason they *think* they're too high.

Lord Julius:
Well, tell them to make up their minds. How about this; "I share your concerns about high interest rates. For the life of me, I can't figure it out either."

Baskin:
I think they'll want more information. More specifics.



Lord Julius
"Specifically, I can't figure out why they're at eighteen and a quarter per cent."

Baskin
Perhaps. Perhaps if you could explain how you arrived at that figure.

Lord Julius
That's just it; the number I pulled out of the hat was seventeen and a half. Listen, I can't get up any momentum with you interrupting all the time. You there. With the cereal bowl on your head. What do we have so far?

Me
"Esteemed representatives of the Joint Upper Felda and Iest Commission on Interest Rate Policy. I welcome you today in a spirit of cooperation and shared concerns. I share your concerns about high interest rates. For the life of me, I can't figure it out either. Specifically, I can't figure out why they're at eighteen and a quarter per cent . . ."

Lord Julius
when the number I pulled out of the hat was seventeen and a half. As I think about it, here before you, my suspicions are aroused. And believe me, as I look at all of you, that's the only thing that's aroused.

Baskin
Lord Julius.

Lord Julius
All right. Strike that last sentence. ' My suspicions are aroused. Could it be that the number was actually the little ticket indicating the size of hat? For I recall, quite clearly, that the hat was unusually large. '

Baskin
Lord Julius. Please. They're looking for specifics.

Lord Julius
. was unusually large and of a soft gray material seldom found in sub-temperate climates. As I consider this now, a great deal seems to hinge on the size of head of the hat's owner. Further, since at no time did I see the figures marked on any of the other slips of paper, it is impossible for me to say with any degree of certainty whether the number in question was high relative to the other numbers or low. Moreover, there is still the question of how seventeen and a half per cent became eighteen and a quarter per cent; a question which concerns all of us here today."

Baskin
Good. Good. Keep going.

Lord Julius
"Thank you for your time and attention and I hope you enjoy the petit fours and watery lemonade on sale in the foyer.

Baskin
Lord Julius.

Lord Julius
A question which concerns all of us here today. In the interests of cooperation and shared concern I propose therefore that you join me in merging the ' Palnan Executive Commission on Floating Interest Rate Policy" and your own . Joint Upper Felda and Iest Commission on Interest Rate Policy" into a new and more effective "Double-Jointed Upper Felda/Iest and Palnu Commission on Interest Rate Reduction and Fiscal Responsibility' As a concrete demonstration of my solemn commitment to this vital issue, I will authorize an immediate doubling of each commission member's salary, tripling of the commission's operating budget. the quadrupling of the commission's research and support staff and . What's times five again?

Baskin.
Quintupling.

Lord Julius
' . and quintupling of the current allocation of office space and office decoration budget. Furthermore, I will sign into law tomorrow a proclamation giving the new Double-Jointed Commission a free hand, an open door and a clean slate for a period of not less than two years, ensuring that its examination of the issue will be as thorough and as all-encompassing as possible, at the conclusion of which, the commission's report will be submitted to the three governments participating for swift and decisive examination and discussion with an eye toward full implementation within an appropriate time-frame."

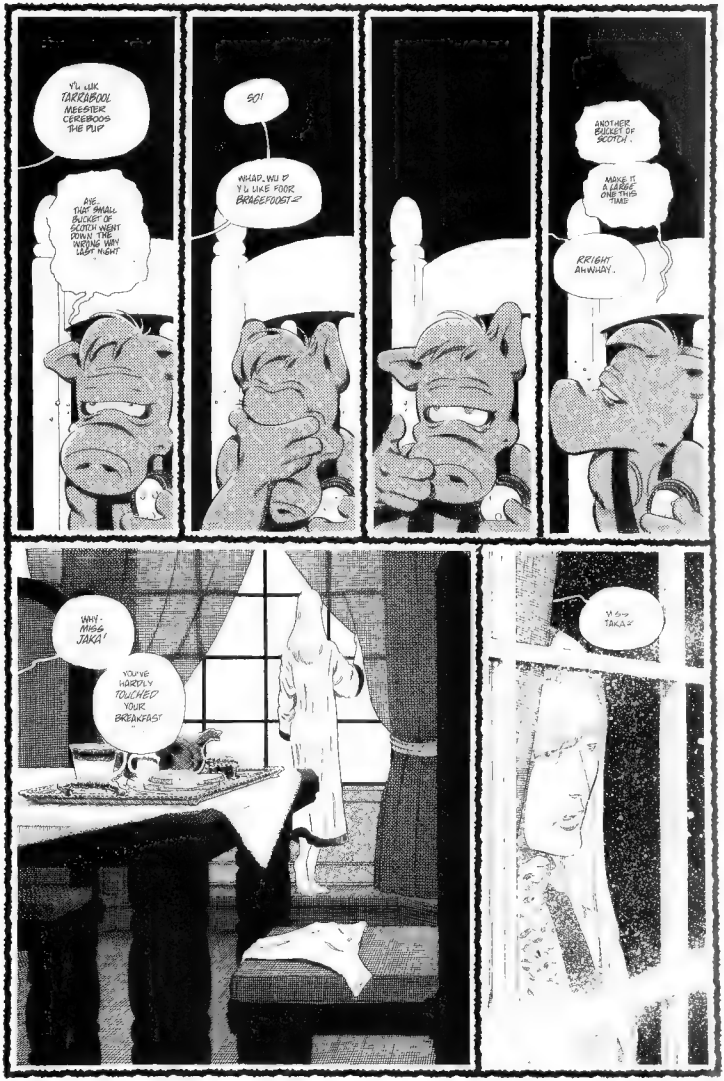
Baskin
Perfect.

Lord Julius
Have the boys at State throw in a few warm reminiscences at the end there about Palnu's long and happy association with those meddlesome vultures.

Baskin
Yes, Lord Julius.

Lord Julius.
Hang that big ugly picture of Clrin behind the podium, make sure it's high enough so you can't see the holes the darts made.

Baskin
Yes, Lord Julius.


Yu wuk TARRABOOL MEESTER CEREBOOS THE PUP
AYE. THAT SMALL BUCKET OF SCOTCH WENT DOWN THE WRONG WAY LAST NIGHT
SO!
WHAP. WU Ø YU LIKE FOOR BRAGEFOOST=
ANOTHER BUCKET OF SCOTCH!
MAKE IT A LARGE ONE THIS TIME
KRIGHT AHWHAY.
WHY, MISS JAKA!
YOU'VE HARDLY TOUCHED YOUR BREAKFAST
Yi-ky TAKA=

I'M NOT HUNGRY
I'M
OH!
WELL
CAN I GET YOU SOMETHING ELSE?
SCOTCH
I'D LIKE A GLASS OF
SCOTCH
ER
YES, GREAT ASTORIA
RIGHT AWAY
AH
YOU'RE AWAKE
I'M AFRAID THE KITCHEN DIDN'T HAVE ANY CHEESE AT ALL...
SO I BROUGHT YOU HALF OF A GRAPEFRUIT INSTEAD. I HOPE THAT'S

with thinner ink for all those little pen lines. Turn your page to ink it, so you are always pulling the nib toward you and make sure you avoid pulling your hand through a 'wet spot'.

★★★★★★★★★★

Brushes. Brushes are two things: expensive and no good. Basically a good brush is intended for water colours. India ink eats them alive. On a percentage basis, one in ten brushes you will get some use out of. The other nine, the tip will split after a few hours use and it is then only good for filling in areas of solid black or painting houses. Windsor Newtons are the best brushes but at twenty dollars a pop, a very expensive crap-shoot. We finally decided to buy nylon brushes which aren't as good, but at five dollars or so, we can afford to throw them away after a page or two. I need brushes for things like wavy black hair, the folds in Swoon's cloak, etc. But I try to limit it to that. If I can do it with a pen nib, I'll do it with a pen nib, although you can only get two or three thick lines out of a crow-quill before it's dead as a door-nail. It's still cheaper and more reliable than those damn brushes. Clean your brushes even more often than you clean your pen nibs, and clean them carefully. Thoroughly rinse them with water and then lightly dry them with a tissue, always pulling the tissue in the direction of the bristles. If it doesn't come to a point, stick it in your mouth and pull it out through your puckered lips. If it still doesn't come to a point, it's a dead brush. Sorry. Inking with a brush is the same as with the pen nib, hold it almost parallel to the page and always pull it towards you, never up or sideways against the grain. If you're inking a long thick line with a brush, practice your zen meditation first and then use your whole arm. Swoosh. It will not work to do the line a quarter inch at a time. Swoosh. If the curve is wrong or the brush went dry before you got to the bottom go out and drink heavily and try again tomorrow.

★★★★★★★★★★

Next: Whether to draw comics or become a plumber.

# AARDVARK COMMENT

**P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2**

Hi Dave— - -
Hi Ger—

Hey, regarding Connie's letter in issue 163.

You mean you'd print a letter if someone wrote about Cerebus biting women's clitorises off?

Yow, .

McWinfrey
Minneapolis, MN
USA

**Yes. But only if it was succinct and dealt with the issue as it pertained to the larger themes of the *Cerebus* story-line.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I'm going to have to get my act together a bit better . . . The following meanderings started out as feedback to *Cerebus* 165 and have been revised to take 166 and 167 into account.

First, an explanation to the message I left on your answerphone Wednesday evening (3 March). Campaign '93. Like it. Like it very much. Want it to succeed. Know a firm over here which does good T- and sweatshirts. Will be at several SF-type conventions between now and the time you come over. May I have you permission to make up a number of non-specific shirts for sale at these cons and pass on any profit made to the nearest comic shop which is supporting the campaign?

Other ideas for the Campaign: how about running off the button designs as stickers? Think of all the fun people could have putting them up in unlikely places . . . Pass it on.

Pity about the original concept for *Cerebus* 0, it would have been such a lovely piss-take. Apropos the "gold" edition, how about individually bending the corner of each cover before dispatch? That way nobody, but nobody, can pass it off as "pristine mint" or any other high-cost rating. There's such a ripoff market in that sort of thing: I remember when I was involved with Valkyrie Press, having to sort through a complete print run of one issue of *Luther Arkwright* by hand looking for duff copies because the printing machine had slipped a cog. To this day I see copies of that issue listed as "mint". There ain't any; trust me, we fingered every single one.

Glad to hear you're going to be gracing the Midlands with your presence this year. For a time it looked like I was going to have to attend UKCRAP, and after last year's fiasco, which included fourteen-year old munchkins fighting to the death for the dubious privilege of paying £100 plus for four small pieces of card with pisspoor pictures of Spiderman, I really didn't want to unless it was absolutely necessary. Thanks for not making it vital. Then again, if you still haven't heard anything from them by August, why not have a good time elsewhere over here?

I'd invite you down to Coventry, as you and Gerhard enjoyed yourselves there so much last time, but there's no comic shop there any more. Nowadays I divide my time between the Midlands where I work, and Edinburgh, where my fiancee lives and saves her pennies to buy your telephone directories (it *had* to be love!). There's this little shop up there would be dead chuffed to have you poke your head around the door, yclept *Deadhead Comics*. Small and fiercely independent, it actually manages to make a living despite a branch of *Foreboding Prices* down the road by stocking enough mainstream stuff to fill its regular order books, and specialising in the weird stuff. Does your itinerary include Scotland? Think about it; it's worth your while, I'm sure. Besides, I've always wanted to meet Cassandra; she sounds like my kind of lunatic.

Either way, when you come over, bring some Diamondback decks with you, pretty please with saccharine and non-dairy coffee whitener? Several people I know are interested in them, but I don't recall them ever being offered for sale by mail order.

Loved the cover for the *Omaha* benefit book. If any copies of either volume made it over here past Her Majesty's Customs and

Excise and into the shops, I have yet to hear about it. Latest news on *Gosh Comics*, who were raided last year (and got reported in most review mags your side of the Atlantic); most of their stock has been returned, and the rest has been destroyed by Customs' usual (and completely legal) ploy of getting the store owners to agree to the destruction of the offending material or be taken to court and probably fined and have a criminal record. With their usual inconsistency, Customs returned books they had seized and destroyed in previous incidents. I believe the phrase is "go figure".

The main result of this climate of fear, so purposefully generated by the forces of Law and Order in this green and pleasant land, is to limit what I and other "adults" may or may not read. If Customs have the power to seize and destroy a consignment of 10,000 comics, mostly mainstream stuff and harmless by anyone's standards, because the shipment contains ONE comic they decide is obscene, our importers will play it safe and NOT order *Omaha, Yummy Fur*, or anything else they consider MIGHT offend Customs. Even the big publishers aren't safe; *Sandman*, and even *Batman*, have fallen foul of their arbitrary gaze of late. As someone who is expected to consider all sides of political debate and cast an informed vote at election time, and possibly be inducted into military service and ordered to fight for my country, I find this nannying more than a tad offensive.

Margaret Thatcher may be yesterday's man (I use the phrase deliberately), but her unspiritual heirs live on: one of our Members of Parliament was so incensed that a foreign satellite TV channel showing pornography could be received in this country that she organised a viewing for her fellow MPs in the House of Commons to show them how awful it was. Naturally, the viewing was packed. The same MP went on to organise a showing of pornographic and ultra-violent videos, magazines, etc. for our political representatives with a view of tightening up our Obscene Publications Act. I have a question for her and the general audience: if, as she maintains, pornography degrades and corrupts those who watch it, then surely she is degrading and corrupting those Members of Parliament who watched these events? By the same token, aren't they now unfit for the positions of responsibility they hold?

Sorry, just a minor rant, but it's just as soothing and a lot kinder on the environment than nuking the ****s.

The latest *Roach* persona is excellent. I gather from the last issue of *Sandman* that Neil likes it too. It must be nice to be mentioned in dispatches in the organ you're parodying. Full marks, and when's the *Hellblazer* crossover?

Hoping to hear from you soon,

Harry Payne
Flat 46, YWCA
161 Corporation Street
Coventry CV1 1FR, UK

**I like the stickers idea. I hope some of the participating stores give it a try. As to the censorship problems in the UK, you're in a very similar situation to Canada. I'm not certain that anything can be done without a First Amendment. In your country and in mine, the Feminist/Matriarchist Agenda supersedes everything else, including freedom of expression; everything is decided capriciously on a case-by-case basis. I could only recommend that creators unite in the UK and form a version of Canada's Comic Legends Defense Fund. Every time there's a new bust, we do a benefit book to help pay the legal costs. The Feminist/Matriarchists will ultimately win (they always do), but you have to fight oppression *especially* when you know you're going to lose.**

★★★★★★★★★★

So Dave,

Here's how it is. I buy according to my instincts. In a dusty second-hand bookshop, beneath the passing feet of Charing Cross Road, I'll flick my eyes across the shelves and wait for a book to reach out and grab me. Books can do that, if you let them, if you give them a chance. A lot of the time I find nothing, maybe miss out on lots, but every now and then I pick up a new friend, and the spontaneity of our meeting makes things all the rosier between us in the flicking nights to come.

Generally my instincts help me hit gold. a few years ago I bought all the Jonathon Carroll novels, up to *A Child Across The Sky*, on a hunch. BINGO times ten!! And it doesn't work only with books. My instincts led me to the cinema to see films by Greenaway and Lynch; they made me pick up a Craig Raine book of poetry called *A Martian Sends A Postcard Home;* they made me buy the first 20 or so issues of *Sandman;* and they made me buy the *Cerebus* graphic novel. Dave, the series has got better since then, but let me tell you this: nothing has EVER made me laugh harder than those first 25 individual gems. Laugh? I nearly pissed myself purple.

Let me explain how I read. I'm a chronology freak. I refuse to read out of order. *A* starts the alphabet, *Z* finishes. Nothing is to be gained from plucking out one solitary *L* or *T* or whatever. The whole is all. With this in mind, having finished *Cerebus*, I rustled together my cash reserves and splashed out on *High Society*. Then *Church and State I*, and just today the second part, with £20 a generous Granny gave me. However, a few weeks ago I broke the chronology, kinda. I bought the first 15 episodes of *Mothers and Daughters*. I haven't read them yet, and won't until I've finished off the graphic novels. However, I did start reading the letters, and this is why I've decided to write

Dave, I love *Cerebus*, but I'd die for the letters pages. They largely avoid the pompous, lick-lick, "here's what issue — means", elephant snot that most letter columns manage to be. These are REAL letters, gerunds from the gonands, verbs from the vulva. This is what the liminal space of comics is all about. This is the world within the borders, the truth outside the fiction. I don't care if I'm using silly words and starting to sound like a ponce. I've found something here and I'll shout its praises till my nails grow and the soil gets shovelled.

Enough of that. Above all I'm writing to tell you I'm catching up, Dave; I'm hot on your heels and closing in. I've just met the two Rolling Stones — the purple tinge came back, Dave, they were some 'in' else. I reckon another 3, 4 months . . . at most half a year, and I'll be up there in the present with you. When that happens I'll write again, maybe bore you with my thoughts on the series, maybe thrill you with my theory of curved time which explains the nature and cause of the universe. Or maybe I'll simply say Hi.

Until the ostrich swallows the ashtray,

I'm Darren O'Shaughnessy.

Summerville, Pallaskenry,
Co. Limerick, Ireland

**I wish that I had that skimming ability. I have to make a mental note of what I'm looking for at Now & Then when I go in and check for it alphabetically. I'm afraid Dave McKean's muted earth tones just don't jump out at me when they're wedged between purple, yellow, magenta and orange book-ends. See you up ahead in the present some time.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

Yes this is just another letter to no one in particular and about nothing particularly. However, I did something both good and useful t'other day so I think I deserve it.

I don't have copies of the comic in front of me so I can't quote names but big cuddly thanks to whoever wrote the letter explaining what was going on in the story. It's not that I can recall anything of what the letter writer said, but he or she has prompted and encouraged me to do a little more than just let the thing wash over me. Thanks also to whoever a few months back provided us all with the wonderful very sad and very, very true one page story on loss (via Bert and Ernie). Thanks also to you Dave for publishing it, and many apologies if I've misremembered events and it wasn't published in *Cerebus* after all.

The biggest thanks of all go to you, Dave and Gerhard, for doing what you do. Going off on a complete tangent . . .

Mike Collins, local comic celebrity and all round great guy. He's currently writing and drawing a monthly for DC which I believe is soon to be cancelled. It's nothing revolutionary, but it is good fun, and I'm quite sure he'd have been happy doing it for a long time yet. Sadly he's maybe not got his chance this time. I won't moan about big company business practices but simply wish Mike the best of luck for the next time.

Mr. Will Eisner, it's great to see from your photographs that this most gentle of men is looking so well. I actually had the pleasure of exchanging a few words with him at a convention in London in 1986 or '87. It was the first of only two or three I've been to and I was somewhat nonplussed at the time when he remarked on being amazed at kids like me enjoying and appreciating his book. The book in question was *A Contract with God* and I'd bought and read it the day before. When I think back to my reaction now I'm the one who's amazed at my incapacity at the time to even be particularly pleased. I think I will always remember Mr. Eisner's grace and charm and only hope that I caused no offence at the time.

Before I go, whilst everyone else is asking for personal appearances on tour and suchlike, can I be cheeky and request some more time off during your next tour to chain yourselves to your drawing boards?

Oh, the good thing I did? I donated a pint of blood on Monday. It's not great effort on my part and might just do some good. I also think it's something lots more people should do.

Yours sincerely,

Richard White

**I remember the first convention I saw Mr. Eisner at after I interviewed him for CANAR in 1974. He was coming towards me, surrounded by fans. I tried out fifty different ways in my head to remind him that I did an interview with him a couple of months ago and by the time he got up to me, I was completely tongue-tied. He stuck out his hand and said "Hi, there. I'm Will Eisner. Remember me?" As always, it was the perfect line for the situation. What a guy.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave:

"Sisters on the outside"

*Have you ever used your blood for lipstick?* she had been asked.

*No,* she had replied.

It left her wondering. She had heard the stories of a woman's blood, of what could be done with its taste and its texture. The thought of it came back to her occasionally, a thought that she wasn't sure she disliked. An opening presented itself to explore. She found herself alone and willing to try.

She had never had much of a problem with handling herself, with the meeting of her fingers and her flesh. But this time, she sensed the importance of what was going to happen, how cold her fingers felt, and how hot and flushed her skin was on top of her tensed muscles. There was a sense of purpose this time, a sense of substance and meaning. She was scared when it came out.

As a little bubble started to form, she caught herself thinking that it was almost as if it were alive. She began to laugh, cool perspiration on her brow, stomach tensing and relaxing. Her throat was dry and tight. *Of course it's alive.*

The blood welled up on her surface, dark and reflective, a circle of light along one rounded curve. Its skin was beginning to congeal, and she was afraid to break it, afraid to trespass. Her eyes were drawn to the sight, her mind drawn to the implications. *Defile. Violate.*

She broke the taboo with no more than a fingertip to her own discharge. She pushed through the bubble, its skin collapsing just as her own pulled in upon itself. Her legs drew in to each other, bare thighs and knees hard and clenched. Her lips stretched tight against her teeth, her jaw pushing upward as her head drifted back.

It all came from right where her one fingertip pressed against her hipbone, a spot triggering so much more, sending out ripples and waves of gorging strength and adrenalin. Her stomach twitched up and down again, but differently this time. She swallowed hard and her lungs fought to draw in air.

It felt as if she had found her body, made a contact beyond the surface, beyond the still portrait of frailty she had always been expected to be. In a place farther and deeper than her stomach, the churning gave way to a warm radiating calm. The fear she once had, the guilt she had of her body, so explicitly a part of womanhood, was gone.

She looked into the dot of blood on the tip of her finger. Her face was caught in it, a dark red image, sliding along a rounded curve. It moved slowly and then across and into the ridges of her fingers, where it held, congealing with the blood by her warm shallow gasps.

She took her lipstick brush in her other hand. The bristled tip met the blood with a tiny point, fooling it into an artificial medium. The brush glanced against her lips with a touch so slight that the sensitive pink could hardly register it. The blood was eager to return.

It spread across and into the ridges and folds of her lips, running down to where she held them so tightly shut. Inside, her tongue pressed forward along the crease for a taste, any taste, just like a tongue would. But as her blood spread its warmth along her lower lip, she

felt her mouth loosen and relax.

It dried darker than she expected, but she wasn't sure it that was the blood on her lips, or the blood inside her lips, reaching out to pull back at its sisters on the outside.

Bending forward into the make-up mirror, she was afraid to purse and ruin it all. She looked deadly, a dark contrast there against the pale skin, but also alive, burning embers of colour and potency. The frailty and vulnerability was gone, it was her own body, her own sense of warmth and beauty, her own allure. She was no longer hidden under all the layers of artificial shades and pigments, she was herself.

She could feel how dry it was, drying there right into the colour of her lips, the moisture taken by her own fluid. She wiped across her mouth with the back of her hand, smearing dried flakes across her cheeks.

Then she smiled and pursed her lips and blew herself a kiss.

*Beautiful.*

By Jessica Shook
1104–323 Colbornest
London, Ontario
N6B 3N8

**Hey. That was great. You wanna have sex some time? I'm just down the highway.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Beware Dave, you are about to be bombarded with thousands of letters from thousands of band-wagon jumpers (no thanks to Todd or anything).

Beware Dave, you do not want to end up the same way the chili peppers did.

Just a warning.

Bruce Harper
6310 Starfield Cres.
Mississauga, Ontario
CANADA L5N 1X4

**Mm. I don't think so, but thanks for the warning.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave:

I guess I'm something of a rarity in these parts, being that I found *Cerebus* all by myself. Nobody said, "here, try this, it's really cool . . ." &c. I was just standing in front of the new issues rack at the comics shop where I had been working for the better part of two years, (Hi Bob, Hi Mark!) perusing the latest X-er . . . X-um . . . never mind, it doesn't matter, when I saw number one-fifty-one, there in the corner. I read it, and I bought it. It just had a level of intensity that I had never seen before. By the end of the school year, I had the entire run, in one form or another, except one-twelve/one-thirteen and one thirty-seven, and one thirty-eight.

Enough with the credentials, let's get on with the letter.

I'm excited about the Campaign, but I don't think my hometown shop will participate, unfortunately, because of a personal dispute concerning back issues and artwork prices that dates back to *Church and State*, maybe earlier. (They sell the comics, they keep back issues, and they sell the phone books, but I don't think they're motivated to go the extra mile for you. Sorry.) But it's good to hear that there are stores that care out there.

It's a lonely life, being a *Cerebus* reader. (I was about to say "fan," but that has extreme negative connotations.) So far, I have met one person who reads *Cerebus* whom I have not introduced *Cerebus* to personally. One. And he quit during *Melmoth*. I'm having to lend him my back issues to get him re-oriented. (It wasn't because of the story. Doctoral theses tend to suck up one's time.) I guess I'm a bit of a *Cerebus* evangelist. I've even got one buying his own now. Sometimes I surprise myself.

Believe it or not, I think Marvel comics has a place in the "industry" (for some reason, that term chafes. I don't think any form of art should be called an industry.) Marvel, and other superhero type comics are like the "Die Hards" of the movies, and the Harlequin romances of the literary world. Mindless, diverting fluff. However, there is such a thing as too much. And Marvel is just putting out too much. Just out of curiosity, being a relative spring chicken, has Marvel tried this before? Have they tried to drown out quality in a mountain of mediocrity, in the name of the ever-elusive "market share?" If so, did it work?

Anyway, I'll stop wasting your time now. If this ever sees print: Like I said, it's a lonely life being a *Cerebus* reader. I'd appreciate some feedback. I'll be in California from May until August, but the rest of the time I'll be in Southwest Michigan, trying to learn something. Hope you liked the stamp.

Goodnight, Mrs. Calabash, wherever you are . . .

Rev. Gregory M. "Better luck next time" Flanders.

In Cali. (Mail will be forwarded.)
435 22nd Street
Santa Monica, CA
USA 90402

**Oh, sure. Marvel and DC used to do it all the time when there was a sudden surge of interest in comic books. Of course the key there was that all distribution was through the news-stands. Trying the same trick in the direct market in the 90's Marvel has set themselves up as the sacrificial lamb. A glut of titles written and drawn by non-'names' and a reliance on gimmicks has caused their market share to plummet from around fifty per cent to around twenty per cent. DC is at thirty-four per cent, but a quarter of that is the Superman Comes Back From the Dead stuff. They are definitely scraping the bottom of their bag of tricks. If Neil Gaiman and Peter David ever wake up and realize that they represent the only credibility either company has, DC real and Marvel are toast.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I just read the latest issue of *Cerebus*. Man did I love it. It was the best comic I ever read. When Cerebus stabbed that guy, man did I get a hard-on. So until Cerebus stops killing people, make mine Marv . . . huh? . . . Aardvark Vanaheim. Sorry. I've confused myself.

Seriously, I'm a new reader to *Cerebus*, and a former big Marvel fan, though I never did write one of those idiot letters they always print (see my 1st paragraph for example). In the past two months I've read a fistful of *Mothers & Daughters* issues and three phone books (two *Cerebus*, one *Southern Bell*), and I must say how excited I am to "discover" this book.

In the ten-plus years I've been reading comics, I've come across numerous mentions of how great your book is. And on several occasions over the years, I've come very close to buying an issue, but I never did, for I was blinded by my hatred for Ninja Turtles and their various rip-offs.

In January, I finally broke down and bought my first issue(s) of *Cerebus*: The Volume One Phone Book. My reaction wasn't too enthusiastic. It was O.K., but not great. It was, as you said, "crude", but it showed a lot of potential. So

I went out and bought *High Society*. It was great. I was hooked. I ended up buying as many issues of *Mothers & Daughters* I could find.

I find your dedication to and your faith in Cerebus a refreshing change of pace from most other comic book folks, who create and quickly abandon their characters (I'll bet that in two or three years, none of the guys at Image will be working on the books that they're working on now).

The idea of a 300 issue series that ends in the death of the title character is a great concept. I would love to see this concept applied by Marvel and DC to their characters. Todd McFarlane would have helped chronicle the death of Spiderman 5 years ago. The X-Men would perish this month. And poor, dumb Superman would have met his doomsday back in 1963, and he would still be dead. But I guess it wasn't meant to be, because only you have the balls and the talent to pull this off.

Anyway, I hope I haven't come across as some raving, prick fanboy. It's just that *Cerebus* is such a rare comic. One with intelligence, wit, great art, and an incredible amount of originality. Thanks.

D.E Smith
681 Remington Forest Dr.
Jacksonville, FL
USA 32259

**Welcome aboard. The companies can never really make any meaningful changes in their continuity, because the characters are trademarks first and foremost; raw materials for merchandising and movies and television. All they can do is kill them and bring them back, kill them and bring them back. Gruesome, eh?**

★★★★★★★★★★

Hey Dave,

First of all let me say that I *love Cerebus*. I've read since #83 and now have issues #50 up and the first two phone books. (I'd love to buy the real issues but I can never find them! Except #6 which I treasure.) Furthermore, I completely back what you have to say about the comics medium and artists' rights and the future of self-publishing, etc. I bow down, I kiss your feet, you're great.

BUT, one thing I hate is the way you always harp on Marvel and DC and go Ga-Ga over any independent or black & white. I don't understand why you back Jack Kirby like he's a martyr of some kind, but you don't back the comics he made. Excuse me if I buy his old FF titles, get hooked and want the rest. Am I then limited to Jack? Is it O.K. with you if I like Bob Layton's *Iron Man?* You make it seem like anyone who reads a Marvel has some kind of skin disease of something ("Uh, oh. Another mainstream guy. Please everyone remain calm." — Aardvark Comment, issue #165.) In the same issue you call Kim Thompson's letter "a classic example of the *Comic Journal's* sneering arrogance". Who's being sneeringly arrogant, Dave? I read a few issues of *Sandman* (because you said to) and I thought they sucked. I think *Love & Rockets* sucks, too. Alan Moore's *Watchmen* was brilliant, but I thought the *Swamp Thing* sucked, big time.

My only point is, that I really like you and your comic, but you are in danger of becoming just like everyone you hate if you give blanket endorsements to certain people, companies or genres. I think each person should be given the chance to read what he likes and decide for himself if it is or isn't good, without being treated like scum by a person whom they look up to (you, Dave.)

Of course, you should say what you do and don't like, but could you just refrain from being so condemning? If makes you look like a dick.

Graydon VanRy
Box 272234
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY
USA 14627

P.S. What the heck is Mike Sivier talking about? I thought *Cerebus* was about a barbarian earth-pig!

**Of course everyone is free to have their own opinion and their own tastes; that includes me. I find that a lot of fans are unaware that the characters they enjoy were purchased for nickels and dimes from creators and are now earning hundreds of thousands of dollars for companies. I think *that* sucks. At the same time, knowing that Bernie Wrightson was ripped off left right and center on *Swamp Thing*, I still read and enjoyed the book when Alan Moore and Rick Veitch were doing it. I think it is shameful that creators are ripped off and I think it is shameful that other creators compound the offense. To their credit, a lot of creators are realizing what 'the game' consists of and are walking away from it. You can say that everyone goes into this with their eyes open but how was Len Wein to know when he created the *X-men* (the NEW *X-men*) that one day he would see them splashed all over comic book stores and television, with royalty payments large enough to buy his successor on the book his own airplane, while Len himself would not see one dime over his page rate for *X-men* 94. At the time, I'm sure he was paid the top rate for writing *X-men* 94 and, at the time, it made as much sense to do that as to do anything else. Fifteen years later, it goes in the Siegel and Shuster file; Great Rip-Offs in Comic Book History. Also, I don't go ga-ga over any independent or black & white. I get a lot of self-published material in the mail that I think is below average or worse. I don't do a *Cerebus* Preview of it, I don't give the creators any assistance and I leave it to those individuals to make their way without my help.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I've been following the complaints of various people in the independent comic book industry for quite some time. I think the problem is that most of these people really don't want to succeed, they secretly want to fail because it validates their world view. How else can their repeatedly snatching defeat from the jaws of victory be explained? They kvetch endlessly about this and that, but to date, I have yet to hear them voice genuine reasons for their problems, only excuses. Take the latest kvetch target, the comic book convention in Angouleme, France. From a business point of view, going there didn't make any sense for most of the independents. And, please don't tell me about the need to open new markets. What business do these people have trying to open markets in Europe, when they can't handle the market they are currently in, right in their own back yards? They should have spent the time finishing their already behind schedule comics, and the money should have gone to paying outstanding debts, or to build a cash reserve for the future. Once they become able to get their products out on time in the US market, then they can think of expanding to foreign markets.

And of to those that did go to the Angouleme convention. How many of them took the time to find out what the top ten selling comics in Europe are? How many tried to get a hold of them and see what they looked like. If they didn't, they can expect no sympathy from me when they weren't able to sell their American comics in France.

I really don't see much hope for improvement in the independent comics industry until the people in it realize that the real world works exactly the way Yoda told Luke Skywalker in *The Empire Strikes Back* when he said, "There is no try. There is only do and not do." Apparently, most of the people in the independent comics industry seem satisfied with "not do."

Now, I could go on at length with advice, but instead I distilled it all into the following. I suggest everyone in the industry make a copy, and hang it in a prominent place.

**NEVER BLAME ON AN EXTERNAL CONSPIRACY WHAT CAN BE ADEQUATELY EXPLAINED BY LOUSY ATTITUDE, LACK OF DISCIPLINE, POOR JUDGEMENT, OR A FAILURE TO RESEARCH AND UNDERSTAND YOUR MARKET.**

Now, that I've vented my spleen, let me go on to say that anyone who wants to really succeed in the independent comics industry would do well to select you and *Cerebus*, as examples of how it's done. They should study the success of your tour, and your dedicated self promotion. I don't think you got where you are today, by waiting for someone else to promote you and your comic.

Sincerely,

Cardiff K. Rees
P.O. Box 1603
Salt Lake City, Utah
USA 84110

P.S. I love the wickedly funny parody of *Sandman* in the recent *Cerebus* issues.

P.P.S. I once thought of doing a comic myself, but instead went into free-lance fine art. As a result, I have a much easier time In comics, I would have to have gotten about 2500 people to like what I had done in order to make a few hundred dollars. As a fine artist, I only need to find one person who likes what I did to make that money, and it takes a lot less time to draw and paint that one picture, than to do a comic.

**Well, I agree with you, and thanks for supporting my position. We're very much in the minority, though. Most creators and publishers positively ACHE to get into foreign markets, book stores and Hollywood where they can be a very small pimple on a very large backside. Go figure.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I hope this comes better late than never. I have to take some opposition with a letter written by Philip J. Flores in *Cerebus* #164. In his letter Mr. Flores makes the proclamation that Rock and Roll is dead because he saw a Bud Lite commercial which used an Iggy Pop song.

I believe the commercial he is referring to is one in which the song "Real Wild Child (Wild One)" is used while showing the wild escapades that take place inside a Bud Lite truck on Party Night. In all fairness to Iggy Pop, I think it should be noted that the song "Real Wild Child (Wild One)" is one which Iggy recorded on his *Blah-Blah-Blah* album, but it is *not* a song that Iggy had a hand in writing. In fact, that song is an obscure gem that dates back to 1958 and is credited to O'Keefe/Greenan/Owens as the writers. Upon close listening, I strongly doubt that it is Iggy's recording that is being used in the Bud Lite commercial. So, Bud Lite's use of the song "Real Wild Child (Wild One)" has really little to nothing at all to do with Iggy Pop.

Regarding the life/demise of Rock and Roll, I would not begin to argue one way or another in a couple of typed pages. But, regarding Iggy Pop's hand in such a decline (as Philip Flores' letter implied), I believe such accusations are unwarranted. Now, if we start hearing Iggy Pop penned songs such as "China Girl" used in an Air Orient commercial or "I Wanna Be Your Dog" used in a commercial to sell little stuffed Pound Puppies (which would actually be kind of interesting in its own strange way, if you think about it), then, indeed, one could possibly include Iggy amongst the list of culprits responsible for the death of Rock and Roll. Until then, leave Iggy out of it — he's cool.

Best,

William Innes

**Hmm. You might be right. *I* thought what he was saying was that a song which is so closely associated with the extreme rebel end of rock 'n' roll (I think Budweiser obviously had their eye on the Iggy Pop connection, not the obscure gem from 1958 connection) means that there is no such thing as rock 'n' roll as rebellion any more. Even at its most rebellious, rock 'n' roll is just a perfect strategic tool for multi-national corporations and, consequently not rebellious; consequently R.I.P.**

**I would agree, however, that Iggy is cool.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave—

Groth's piece about the "Two Daves" really got to you, didn't it? I mean, this whole self-justification bit you've been pulling is pretty obvious (even for *you*). "Fun?" What's so "fun" about shitting on your past & future work? Why are you trying to bridge the gap between heartfelt, ambitious comics work and fool's gold for speculators? There *is* definitely a line drawn, as there *always* has been, with genuine comic artists & enthusiasts on one side and greedy, and/or unenlightened craftsman & fans on the other. Guess which side almost all the retailers & distributors are on?

Give up, man; you sold your soul for a handful of coins and a pat on the back from the enemy.

Marc "tidy-bowl man" Payton

**Hardly. Gerhard and I make a very good living off of *Cerebus* and the company is very secure financially. This was true before I started TOUR '92 or CAMPAIGN '93. I need neither a handful of coins or a pat on the back. I do what I think is right and what I think is helpful for the comics medium.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

Issue 17 of *Mothers and Daughters* just came out, and I must say that I love it — more than any other *Cerebus* storyline since I started reading *Cerebus* at issue 93. I am finding the sexual imagery to be somewhat heavy-handed, but the overall writing has been so good that I have no problems overlooking the piethora of phalluses (phalli?).

The reason that I am writing is that, for the first time, I think I have something to say about the storyline. I was re-reading the entire series last night and so, eventually, came across the Judge's history of universe. He said, "In the beginning there was the void, and the void was Tarim." He continued to describe Tarim: "Across the endless reaches of the macrocosmic and microcosmic multiverse . . . the void thinks with a single mind. . . . that single mind is Tarim." What you (or the Judge anyway) have postulated here, is the independent existence of nothingness, of the void. What you have done, is to essentially re-invent the Newtonian paradigm (sorry to use the p-word, but I couldn't think of a less abused, yet still accurate, term). One of Sir Isaac Newton's big goals early in his life was to refute Rene Descartes' system of understanding the universe. In the end, the metaphysical distinction that Newton attacked Descartes with was the nature of the void. Descartes thought that space only existed in relation to physical objects — take away all substance and there would no longer be any physical world. Newton countered with the idea that space is an independent entity that exists in and of itself. Like I just wrote, you have restated the Newtonian metaphysic.

All this has some interesting implications. For Newton's system was primarily about re-affirming the role of God in the creation. When I first read *Walking on the Moon*, I thought that you were supporting an atheistic universe (or, at least, absolute metaphysical skepticism, à la David Hume). But, as you used the Newtonian system, you have allowed for a real and active God in your universe. Not that you necessarily want an active God in your world, I am just pointing out that the Judge's metaphysics implies the God of Newton. (God, all the neat-o things I'm learning in college).

Some quick comments regarding Diamondback, the universe and everything. Thus far, the numerology employed by Cirin and others all assumes a two-player version of Diamondback. But is *Cerebus* (the story) really a two-player game. There are three aardvarks, does that mean this is a three-player game. Could Astoria, or anyone else, also be a player? If there are more than two players, Cirin's and Po's (and everyone's) numerology falls apart.

Regardless of the number of players, there is still the singular magician to account for. Is Cerebus the magician? I cannot decide if he is a third player or the magician. I cannot find a "Mind Games III" or an "Odd Transformations III"; is this significant — there is no third player perhaps — or am I just unobservant? (Or are you being a smart-ass Dave? Could Cerebus be an insignificant pawn, with no great role in the game? That possibility would be really annoying . . .) Are Cerebus and Jaka the mysterious "highest hand" (magician-priestess) for which we have been waiting?

I must go back to work now, but, as usual, I eagerly anticipate the rest of the storyline.

Sincerely and truly,

Mark J. Russell

**Thank God he's dead, or I would owe Isaac Newton a very large royalty cheque. *The* magician is a tricky concept. *A* magician is a little more workable; I could make a very good case that a great deal of corruption has resulted from the Church's ability to advance Jesus as a singular manifestation, instead of as a specific incarnation of an archetype. In the world I see, the patterns form and reform; if you see JFK as the magician, Jackie and Marilyn Monroe would be obvious candidates for priestesses. But let's say JFK is the white magician and Sam Giancana is the black magician. In that case, they shared two priestesses: Marilyn Monroe and Judith Campbell. That only scratches the surface (I'm running out of room here). That's a lot of what I'm trying to document in *Cerebus*: sometimes the Magician, sometimes the Emperor, sometimes the Hierophant, sometimes the Fool, sometimes the Hermit. You don't tend to be one card or another. Cerebus may have been the Emperor in *High Society*, but was neutralized because Astoria was the Priestess and the Hierophant; the same trick she pulled on Lord Julius. Salman Rushdie, was, I think, making the same point in Satannic Verses; the Magician may be dictating, but whoever is transcribing is the Hierophant. Whoever interprets (or more perniciously translates) that Hierophant's transcription becomes the new Hierophant. I probably haven't answered any of your questions, which is very much in the order of things, if you think about it.**


**DAVE SIM PERSONAL APPEARANCES 1993**

**May 3, 4 MILWAUKEE**
Capital City Trade Show

**MAY 16–18 PARSIPPANY, NJ**
Heroes World Trade Show

**JUNE 5–8 ATLANTA**
Diamond Seminar

**JUNE 10 DECATUR**
The Comic Company

**JUNE 11–13 CHARLOTTE, NC**
Heroes Con.

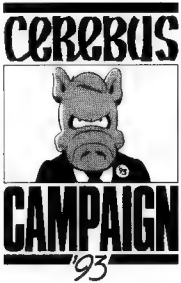
**JULY 2–4 CHICAGO**
Comicon

**JULY 31 WINDHAM, MAINE**
Casablanca Comics

**AUGUST 19–22 SAN DIEGO**
Comicon

**SEPTEMBER UK TOUR '93**
Confirm:
Fantastic Store
Nottingham
•
Chris'
New Store
(formerly Timeslip)
Newcastle
•
AKA Books
Glasgow

**NOVEMBER 13, 14 MANSFIELD, OHIO**
Mid-Ohio Con.




Dear Mr. Sim:

The comic industry continues to grow at an astounding rate; thank you for your contribution to this unbelievable growth. CAMPAIGN '93 will undoubted be a smash worldwide if retailers — particularly U.S. retailers — ever wake up.

Please enter my name to the CAMPAIGN mailing list. As I do not have a store per se my comic book delivery service has embarked upon a venture called "Comics on Campus". I began earlier this month in Brooklyn's Pratt Institute (my alma mater) and hope to expand to other schools in coming weeks. *Cerebus* is popular with college co-eds and big boys on campus as you well know. Your ad slicks, button and T-shirt designs will help promote the most consistent comic available today. Selling comics without a store is challenging and forces me to again (my architectural career was suspended in November) use all creative "juices" at my disposal. I look forward to working with your company.

Yes, I know what has to be done.

Best regards,

Roland Edwards, Jr.
Comic Courier
2305 East 22nd Street
Marine Park, NY
USA 11229

**Now, this one is a first. And to think, I might never have heard of this idea without CAMPAIGN '93. Your package is on the way, Roland.**

★★★★★★★★★

'Cerebus is popular with college co-eds and big boys on campus'

Dear Dave,

While I don't expect you'd remember, I met you at the Boston and Albany stops on the '92 Tour. In Albany you did a nice drawing of Cerebus in his travelling clothes, complete with Gerhard bricks, in my copy of *Church & State I*, which made a couple of my *Cerebus*-reading friends really jealous because they didn't come along with me that day. Back in December of 1991, a friend of mine handed me the Bi-Weeklies of the first five issues of *Cerebus*, telling me I'd really like it. He'd previously told me to read *Punisher* and *X-Men*, so I wasn't expecting too much, but this time I found myself laughing harder than I could remember for quite a while. I was going through a tough time around then, (to borrow an oft-appearing line from Aardvark Comment, "She dumped me, Dave.") and I guess *Cerebus* gave me something fun to do while I worked through things.

I blew through my friend's collection in about three weeks and signed up for a subscription of my own at the store he got his books from. A couple of weeks later, the shop had a special on the Bi-Weeklies (49 cents each!), and I walked out with about 60 comic books. That's when "the addiction" started. I decided I had to have a full set of *Cerebus* of my own. I filled in the holes in the set of Bi-Weeklies, found most of the later books at the Boston and Albany shows, and then made the financially disastrous decision that I wouldn't have a complete set unless I had originals of ALL the books. In short, I became a *Cerebus* maniac. A little more than a year after first seeing the aardvark, I've got almost every Cerebus item imaginable. I'm still looking for issues 1,2,7,9,13 and 15, and don't have the Cerebus stuffed toy, but just about everything else out there, I've got. All the pins, all the t-shirts, all the phone books (I like my friends, but not enough to loan them the originals!), you name it. I've talked two people into buying the phone books, and I even gave a full set of *Cerebus* to a friend of mine as a going away present last spring.

So after that introduction, here's the point of my letter. Last Wednesday I picked up issue #167 and read the details of Campaign '93, which really sounds great. It would be nice to see shops put some effort into promoting books like *Cerebus*, since too few comic buyers ever hear about "little" books at your average comics shop. The only reason I read anything other than *Cerebus* now is that the people at the shop I used to go to, *Same Bat Channel* up in Massachusetts (sadly now closed due to problems with the IRS), introduced me to *Flaming Carrot* and *The Tick*.

At the same time, my heart sank while reading the details of Campaign '93. Last fall I moved from Massachusetts to Virginia to go back to school, and while Charlottesville is a great place for studying law, it's a *Cerebus* wasteland. The comics shop here often doesn't know when or if *Cerebus* has come out, and they order exactly two copies of each issue for each of their two stores. I can't even get a store subscription here because they won't do them for people who aren't signed up for a least ten titles monthly. This is not only a real hassle each month, but with Campaign '93 going on, means I'm going to miss out on all the new items coming for the Campaign.

Specifically, I want a chance to get a Gold Cerebus Zero, and there's no way there's going to be one around here. I even went to the shop yesterday, showed them the details, and asked that if I ordered 50 regular Cerebus Zero's, would they give me the Gold one that went along with them, and asked them about a price break on the regulars. They told me I could order the 50 regular issues, but that they wouldn't go below cover price on them, I'd have to pay in advance, and regardless, they'd still take the Gold logo issue and sell it separately. Needless to say, I didn't take them up on the offer. I decided instead it was time to go to the source.

I want to become a "comic shop" for the purposes of Campaign '93. I'd like to buy 50 copies of the white Cerebus Zero, and the Gold one that comes along with them, direct from you, at whatever they'd cost from a distributor. I don't intend to sell the regular ones: in support of the Campaign I'll *give them away* to people who don't already read *Cerebus* but look like likely targets. In addition, if you'll send me the promotional materials, I'll even print up some of the flyers and such and post them around the campus. Hell, I'll even make up some buttons, since a friend of mine has a button maker, and maybe even get a few t-shirts made. I'd rather get them direct from you, but if I can't do this, can you at least point me in the direction of a distributor who will sell me 50 Cerebus Zero's and the Gold issue as a one time sale? I wish I could pay full cover for them, but I'm looking at around $15,000 in student loans next year and just can't spend over $100 on comic books that I'm going to give away. Last year when I was employed it wouldn't have been a problem, but being a poor student again really sucks.

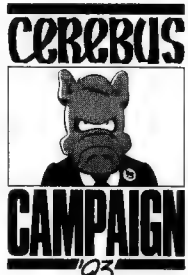
I know this is a fairly unusual idea, and if there were any "ordinary" way for me to participate in Campaign '93, I wouldn't be asking. Since there's not, though, this is the only thing I can think of, and as a big *Cerebus* booster, it doesn't seem all that crazy to me. Then again, scanning in different *Cerebus* covers and having them show up when someone turned on the Macintoshes in the public computer lab I ran last year didn't seem crazy to me, either. Thanks for your consideration!

Till #300,

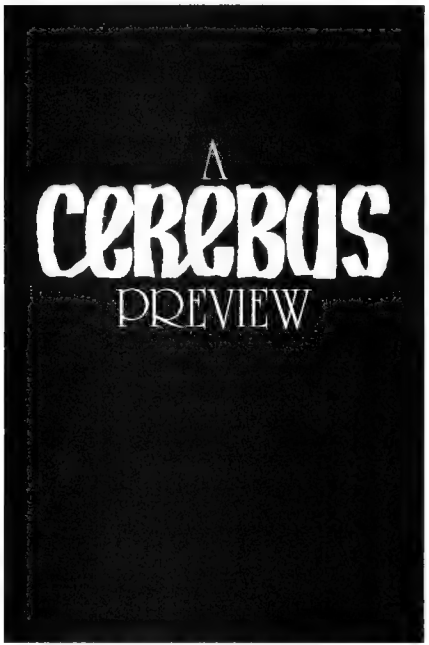
Craig Garnett
1803 Solomon Rd. #9
Charlottesville, VA
USA 22901

**Boy just when you think you've figured out all the angles on something. We've already had a few inquiries about this very thing; *Cerebus* completeists who can't get a Cerebus gold logo number zero; and are afraid that the first time they see one it will have a hundred dollar price tag on it. Obviously, Craig, I like your idea, and we'll be happy to offer fifty copies of Cerebus Zero at a 40% discount and send you a gold logo edition. One fan giving out fifty copies of the white logo (or forty-nine, you completist you) is obviously a great idea that I hadn't considered for CAMPAIGN '93. Same deal as the reprint volumes; you can send in a cheque or money order or put it on your VISA or MASTERCARD by phone or mail any time before the end of May when we'll be sending the orders to Preney. I apologize to all of the *Cerebus* collectors who resent the approach I've taken with Cerebus Number Zero. In my defense, I *will* say that there is not a whole lot of difference between the white logo and the gold logo (two different word balloons and some gold ink). I am still primarily interest in getting people to read *Cerebus* and if I could persuade a store that only orders ten copies to order fifty by offering the gold logo, I'm hopeful that those extra forty copies would find their way into the hands of people who would like to give *Cerebus* a try but have never found the right 'on-ramp'. Since I have gotten the first few collector complaints, I've been trying to figure out a way to 'play ball' with you without getting the retailers who are participating in CAMPAIGN '93 upset over preferential treatment. The first step is probably to find out the extent of the problem. If you're a *Cerebus* collector who is pissed off that you can't get a gold logo Cerebus Number Zero, write and tell me in twenty-five words or less why you think it is important that you get one, or why your life will be destroyed if you don't get one, or what you will do with one if you get one. To avoid disappointment (as Bob Burden once said) send before midnight (that line always cracks me up).**

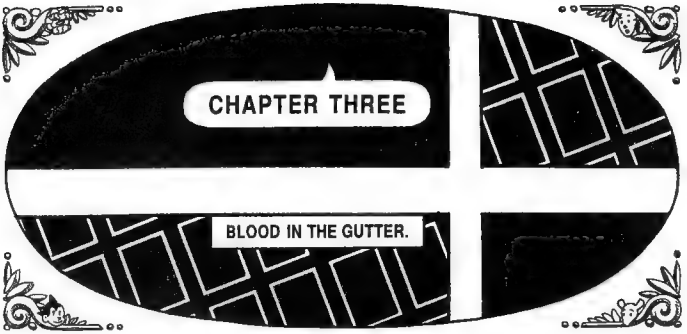
★★★★★★★★★★

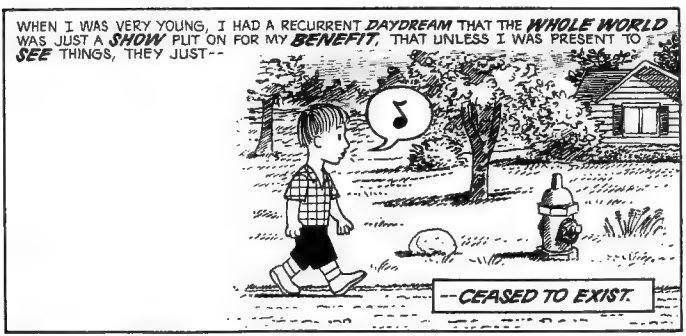


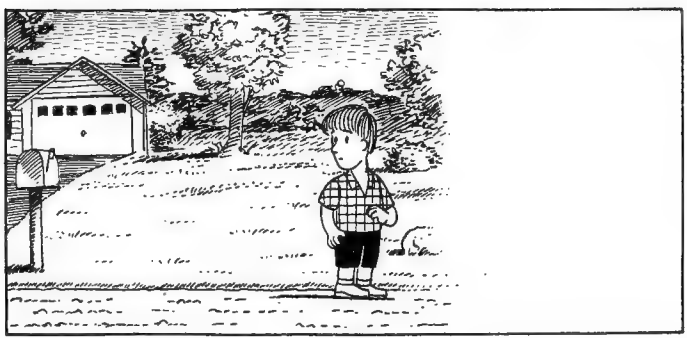

"I want to become a 'comic shop' for the purposes of CAMPAIGN '93"

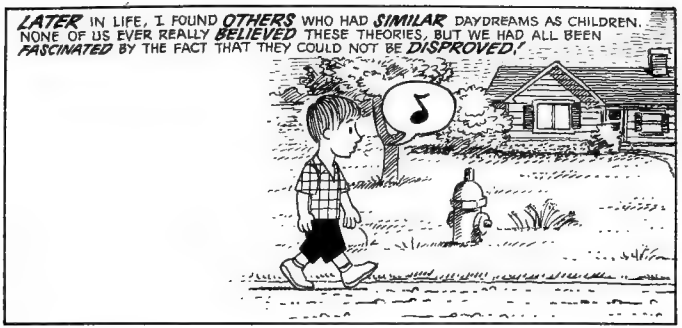



This, unfortunately, is just a small taste of Scott McCloud's ground-breaking work, *Understanding Comics*, which I heartily recommend to everyone; whether you are an aspiring comics creator, an interested by-stander or a veteran of the field. Scott has done a wonderful job selecting an excerpt for these pages and I can only say that the rest of the one hundred and fifty-odd pages are just as thought-provoking, innovative and insightful as what you see here. Whether it is going to be readily available and stocked in depth by comic book stores remains to be seen, but it is well worth hunting down, pre-ordering or whatever it takes. Consider this introduction a post-hypnotic suggestion 'when you see *Understanding Comics* you will pick it up and buy it, wherever you are, in a store or at a convention.' Ladies and gentleman; my good friend, Scott McCloud.


CHAPTER THREE
BLOOD IN THE GUTTER.

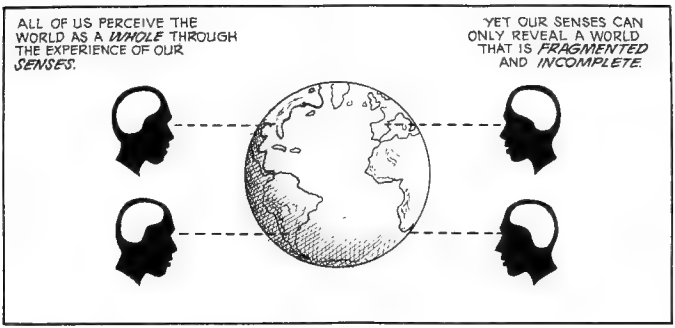

WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG, I HAD A RECURRENT DAYDREAM THAT THE WHOLE WORLD WAS JUST A SHOW PUT ON FOR MY BENEFIT, THAT UNLESS I WAS PRESENT TO SEE THINGS, THEY JUST--
--CEASED TO EXIST.

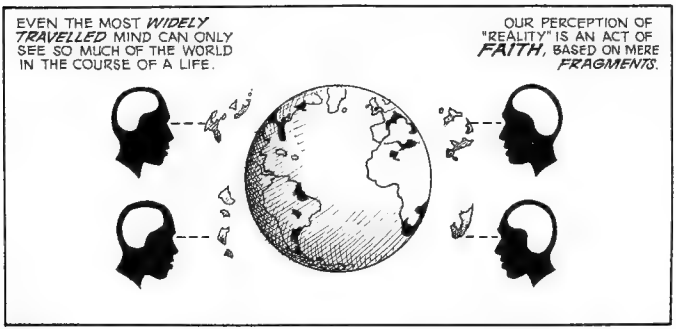



LATER IN LIFE, I FOUND OTHERS WHO HAD SIMILAR DAYDREAMS AS CHILDREN. NONE OF US EVER REALLY BELIEVED THESE THEORIES, BUT WE HAD ALL BEEN FASCINATED BY THE FACT THAT THEY COULD NOT BE DISPROVED!

EVEN TODAY, AS I WRITE AND DRAW THIS PANEL, I HAVE NO GUARANTEE THAT ANYTHING EXISTS OUTSIDE OF WHAT MY FIVE SENSES REPORT TO ME.*

*NOT TO SAY OUR SENSES ARE ANY KIND OF GUARANTEE!


ALL OF US PERCEIVE THE WORLD AS A *WHOLE* THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR *SENSES*.
YET OUR SENSES CAN ONLY REVEAL A WORLD THAT IS *FRAGMENTED* AND *INCOMPLETE*.

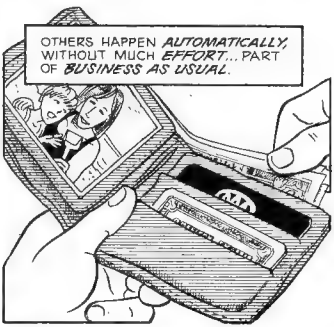

EVEN THE MOST *WIDELY TRAVELLED* MIND CAN ONLY SEE SO MUCH OF THE WORLD IN THE COURSE OF A LIFE.
OUR PERCEPTION OF "REALITY" IS AN ACT OF *FAITH*, BASED ON MERE *FRAGMENTS*.

AS *INFANTS*, WE'RE *UNABLE* TO COMMIT THAT ACT OF FAITH. IF WE CAN'T *SEE* IT, *HEAR* IT, *SMELL* IT, *TASTE* IT OR *TOUCH* IT, IT ISN'T *THERE!*
Peek-A-Boo!
THE GAME *"PEEK-A-BOO"* PLAYS ON THIS IDEA. GRADUALLY, WE ALL LEARN THAT EVEN THOUGH THE *SIGHT* OF MOMMY COMES AND GOES, MOMMY *REMAINS*.
Peek-A-Boo!

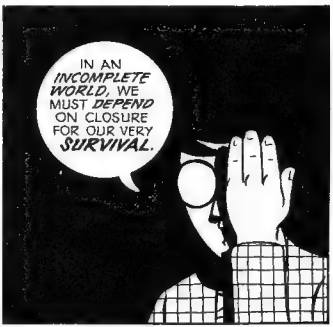
THIS PHENOMENON OF *OBSERVING THE PARTS* BUT *PERCEIVING THE WHOLE* HAS A *NAME*.
IT'S CALLED *CLOSURE*.

IN OUR DAILY LIVES, WE OFTEN COMMIT CLOSURE, MENTALLY COMPLETING THAT WHICH IS *INCOMPLETE* BASED ON *PAST EXPERIENCE*.
PEPSI
SALE

SOME FORMS OF CLOSURE ARE *DELIBERATE INVENTIONS* OF *STORYTELLERS* TO PRODUCE *SUSPENSE* OR TO *CHALLENGE AUDIENCES*

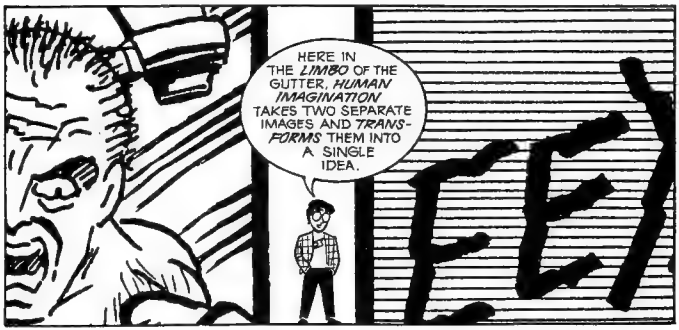

OTHERS HAPPEN *AUTOMATICALLY*, WITHOUT MUCH *EFFORT*... PART OF *BUSINESS AS USUAL*.

IN *RECOGNIZING* AND *RELATING TO OTHER PEOPLE*, WE *ALL* DEPEND *HEAVILY* ON OUR LEARNED ABILITY OF CLOSURE.

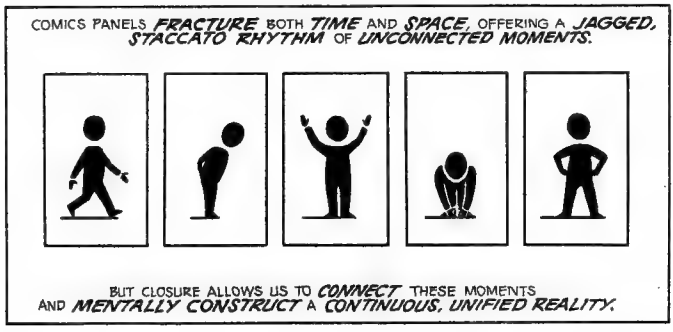

IN AN *INCOMPLETE WORLD*, WE MUST *DEPEND* ON CLOSURE FOR OUR VERY *SURVIVAL*.

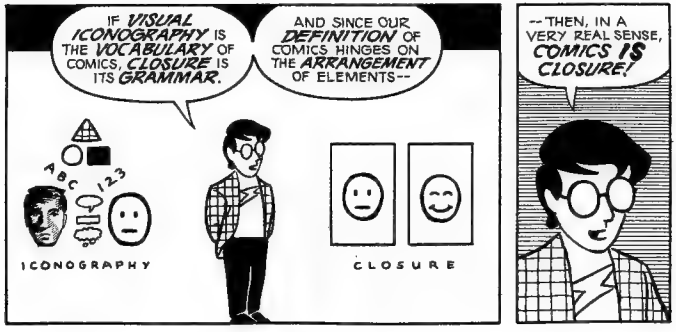
NOW YOU DIE!!
NO! NO!
EEYAA!!

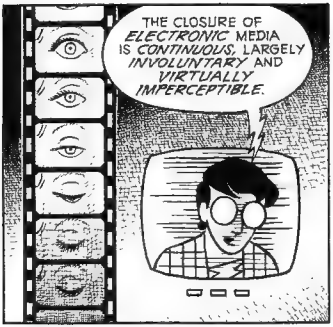
SEE THAT SPACE BETWEEN THE PANELS? THAT'S WHAT COMICS AFICIONADOS HAVE NAMED "THE GUTTER."
AND DESPITE ITS UNCEREMONIOUS TITLE, THE GUTTER PLAYS HOST TO MUCH OF THE MAGIC AND MYSTERY THAT ARE AT THE VERY HEART OF COMICS!

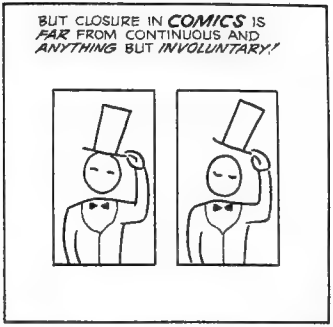

HERE IN THE LIMBO OF THE GUTTER, HUMAN IMAGINATION TAKES TWO SEPARATE IMAGES AND TRANSFORMS THEM INTO A SINGLE IDEA.
EE!

NOTHING IS *SEEN* BETWEEN THE TWO PANELS, BUT *EXPERIENCE* TELLS YOU SOMETHING *MUST* BE THERE!
Peek-A-Boo!
Peek-A-Boo!


COMICS PANELS *FRACTURE* BOTH *TIME* AND *SPACE*, OFFERING A *JAGGED, STACCATO RHYTHM* OF *UNCONNECTED MOMENTS.*
BUT CLOSURE ALLOWS US TO *CONNECT* THESE MOMENTS AND *MENTALLY CONSTRUCT* A *CONTINUOUS, UNIFIED REALITY.*

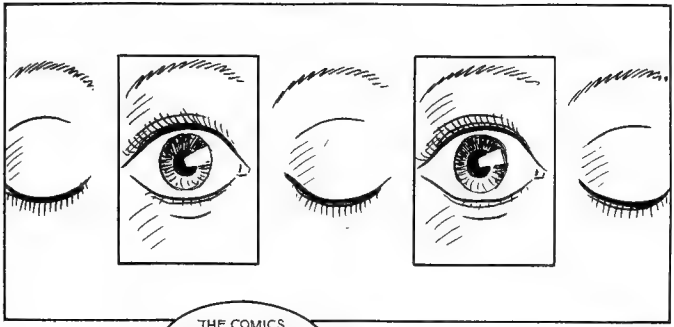

IF *VISUAL ICONOGRAPHY* IS THE *VOCABULARY* OF COMICS, *CLOSURE* IS ITS *GRAMMAR.*
AND SINCE OUR *DEFINITION* OF COMICS HINGES ON THE *ARRANGEMENT* OF ELEMENTS--
ABC 123
ICONOGRAPHY
CLOSURE
--THEN, IN A VERY REAL SENSE, *COMICS IS CLOSURE!*

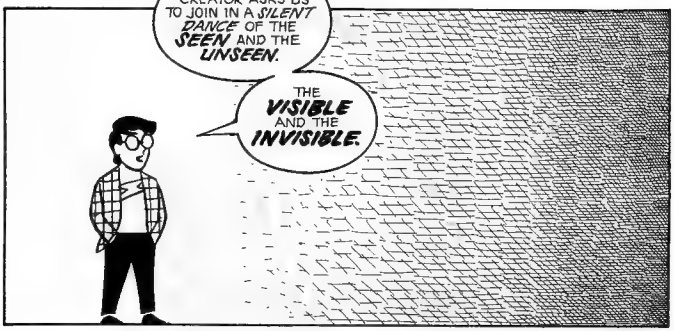


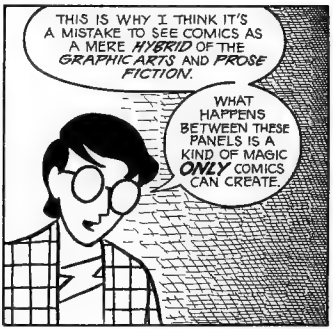
I MAY HAVE DRAWN AN AXE BEING RAISED IN THIS EXAMPLE, BUT I'M NOT THE ONE WHO LET IT DROP OR DECIDED HOW HARD THE BLOW, OR WHO SCREAMED, OR WHY.

THAT, DEAR READER, WAS YOUR SPECIAL CRIME. EACH OF YOU COMMITTING IT IN YOUR OWN STYLE.




THE COMICS CREATOR ASKS US TO JOIN IN A SILENT DANCE OF THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN.
THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE.

THIS DANCE IS UNIQUE TO COMICS. NO OTHER ARTFORM GIVES SO MUCH TO ITS AUDIENCE WHILE ASKING SO MUCH FROM THEM AS WELL.


THIS IS WHY I THINK IT'S A MISTAKE TO SEE COMICS AS A MERE HYBRID OF THE GRAPHIC ARTS AND PROSE FICTION.
WHAT HAPPENS BETWEEN THESE PANELS IS A KIND OF MAGIC ONLY COMICS CAN CREATE.

***Flight*** (Mothers & Daughters Book One) will be available from Aardvark Vanaheim as of April 15. Originally, we intended just to offer both the signed and numbered first printing and the regular edition to the direct market, forgetting that a lot of you have specified the same number when ordering *Jaka's Story* and *Melmoth* directly from us. Oops. Our solution? We will be selling the first 435 signed and numbered copies directly by phone and mail order. Please contact us as soon as possible if you want a specific number. First come, first serve. The signed and numbered edition is **$25.00** plus **$3.00** postage and handling. The regular unsigned edition is **$17.00** plus **$3.00** postage and handling.

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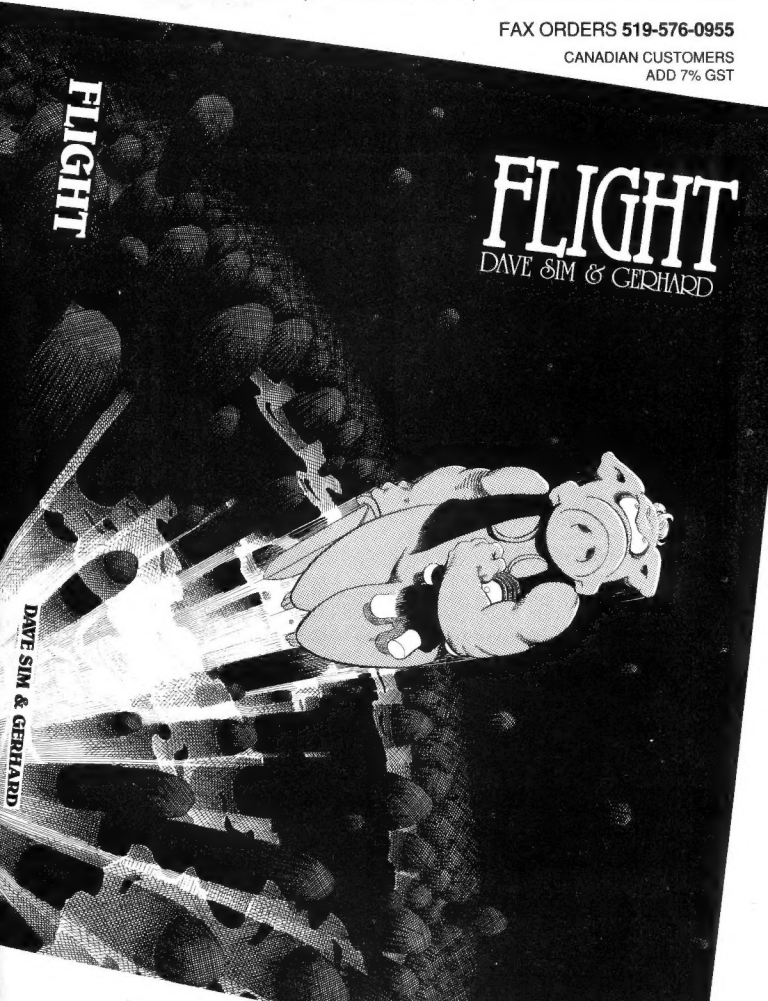

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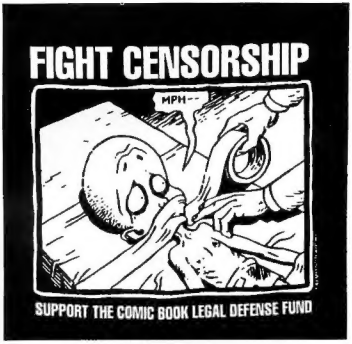


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# The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund

**a non-profit organization**

"Without their support...we wouldn't have been able to say that we think we're right."
-- Comic shop owner Bill Hatfield

In recent years, police and prosecutors around the country have decided to crack down on comics. For politicians, it's a way to look tough without making waves. After all, who cares about comics? For cartoonists and their readers, it's a dire threat. The comics that have been accused of being allegedly "harmful to adults" include work by the best cartoonists of our time: Robert Crumb, Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez, Reed Waller, and others.

In its five years of existence, the CBLDF has spent over $50,000 protecting cartoonists' freedom of speech. Every case we've fought, we've won.

Now we face our biggest challenge ever. In May and June of 1992, three comic shops in the USA were raided by police looking for adult material. All three store owners assert that this material was available only to adults. A defeat in any one of these cases will erode First Amendment rights. The CBLDF intends to fight these attacks and we're calling on everyone who cares about comics and free speech to support us.

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